



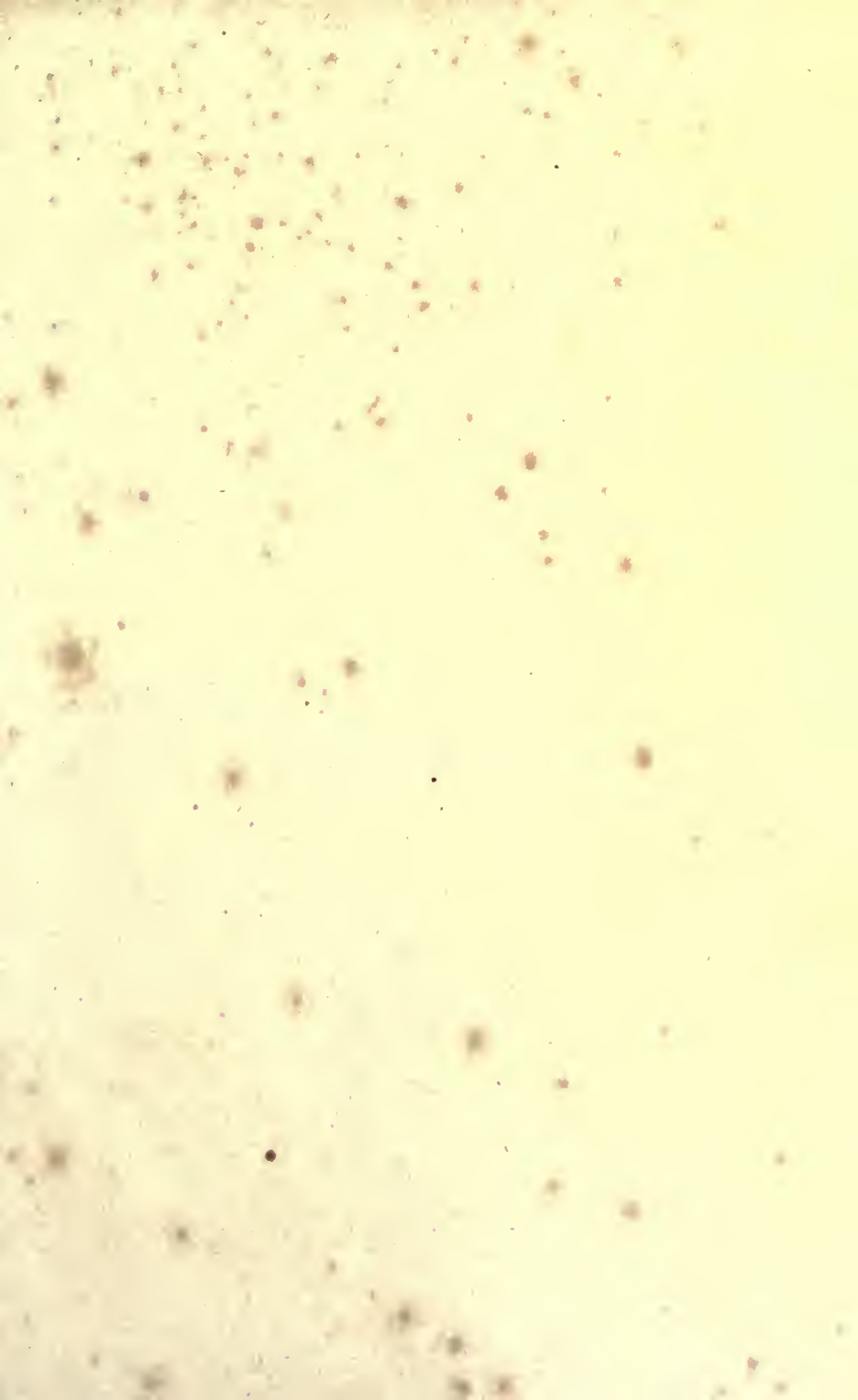
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# SOLEMN REASONS

FOR BELIEVING THAT

## GOD IS ONE :

AND FOR WITHHOLDING ASSENT TO THE PROPOSITION THAT

## GOD IS THREE.

“The fundamental principle of Protestantism is, the Bible is the only rule of faith and practice.”—*Professor Stewart.*

“The language of Scripture, is the language of common sense; the plain artless language of nature. Why should writers adopt such language as renders their meaning obscure; and not only obscure, but unintelligible; and not only unintelligible, but utterly lost in the strangeness of their phraseology?”

*Dr. Dwight.*

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BY JOSHUA LEONARD,

*Member of the Presbytery of Cortland, New-York.*

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*Cazenovia:*

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1834.

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## REASON I.

*The Scriptures are explicit in asserting the Unity of God.*

“AND Jesus answered him, The first of all the commandments is, Hear, O Israel, The Lord our God is One Lord. . . And the scribe said unto him, Well, Master, thou hast said the truth; for there is One God; and there is none other but he. And Jesus saw that he answered discreetly.”—Mark, xii. 29.

Need I proceed and collect passages which assert, with no reserve, that Jehovah is One? It is needless. God styles himself “The Holy One;” and says, he knows not any other. Here we are safe in believing with all the soul. We must so believe; or we cannot love him with all the heart, and mind, and strength. We need fear no consequences. We may regard as fabulous, every scheme of theology, which trenches on this foundation of all religion; natural, Jewish, or christian.



I use terms literally, when I say, God is One Being; One Person; One Agent; One Spirit, infinitely great and good. Each individual man is conscious that he is one. And if he were asked in what sense he is one; he would justly suspect that the querist had some sly intention to entangle him. When God says that He is One; the man without guile supposes that God is one, as he is one: one conscious being. And so I understand that God is one.

I remark that GOD SUPREME is meant: He who was before the world; before man; before the created soul and body of the man Christ Jesus: the Unchangeable Divinity, from everlasting to everlasting.

It is the custom as well of scripture, as of heathen writers, to give the name God to every being which is made the object of religious worship: whether it be superior or inferior; whether it be one or many. And the word Lord, is used with meanings still more various and diminutive. "There be Gods many, and Lords many: but to us, there is but one God, the Father."—I. Cor. viii. 5. The Father is GOD SUPREME. This one God, is the Father of angels and of men; and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. He is the Great Creator; the King Immortal and Invisible; the unlimited and indivisible Jehovah. He is unbegotten, unborn, unoriginated, independent, everlasting. This God is united to the man Christ Jesus: and is the divinity of Christ. Otherwise he has no divinity. For there is no other reigning divinity in the universe. All others are fabulous. "The head of Christ is God."—I. Cor. ii. 3.—(Appendix A.)

"To us there is but one God, the Father: and one Lord Jesus Christ."

Jesus means Saviour. But Jesus was a proper name among the Jews.



Messiah, from the Hebrew ; and Christ, from the Greek, both mean anointed. Christ was not a proper name ; but a title of office. It was therefore applicable to the whole succession of kings and high priests, good and bad, of the people of Israel. Prophets, priests and kings, were designated to their functions by being anointed with oil. Hence David said of Saul, "The Lord forbid that I should do this thing unto my master, the Lord's Christ, to stretch forth mine hand against him ; seeing he is the Christ of the Lord."—I. Sam. xxiv. 6. This accords with the original. The title Christ was applied to others chosen of God to fulfil his great designs.—Thus in Ps. cv. 15, "Touch not my Christs, and do my prophets no harm." Hence the title "The Christ" was given by the inspired writers, to that great personage, foreshewn as one day to arise in Israel ; in whom all the offices of prophet, priest and king unite. Thus David represents him as anointed of God, to be king of God's heritage : Isaiah, as consecrated to be God's messenger of good tidings to men : and Daniel, as appointed of God to make expiation for the sins of the people. Hence, "The Christ" was used as a name of office by the suffering Saviour himself, while he remained on earth : and is so used by the evangelists. But Jesus Christ came by degrees to be used as the *proper* name of the man who was crucified under Pontius Pilate ; and is so used in the epistles ; and so, commonly with us.

And by reason that the union of divinity and humanity became more and more apparent, in and towards the concluding part of revelation ; and that the Almighty power of the in-dwelling Godhead was displayed in his acts ; and that titles were given him which are given to the Father who was in him, and in whom he was ; and that the

divinity and humanity co-existed, co-willed, and co-acted; and that "we see the attributes of human nature in such intimate conjunction with those of the divine:" hence the import of the now proper name Christ, is enlarged to comprehend both natures. We sometimes use the name Jesus Christ for the divinity and humanity united. And the rather, since we sinners correspond with the Father by the Son. And this orthodox language is expressive of scriptural meaning. And the orthodox have also made this correct distinction, viz: when they speak of the divinity only; or irrespective of the created nature; they call him God, Lord, or Jehovah; and not Jesus Christ: as we never hear them say, The heavens declare thy glory, O Lord God Jesus Christ. But when they mean to embrace and specially refer to the humanity, always regarded as in union with the divinity; they use the proper name Jesus Christ, embracing the whole complex person. And however this may have come to be common language, there is correctness in the distinction it indicates.

Almost all words have different senses in different discourses: so they have in the sacred writings. Even the words God, Lord, Father, Son, Spirit, Grace, Worship; all are used with different meanings in different passages. Thus, Jehovah said to Moses, "See, I have made thee a God to Pharaoh."—Exod. vii. 1. Earthly rulers and judges are called Gods, on account of their dominion among men; bearing a distant resemblance to the dominion of the Most High. Thus in Ps. lxxxii, "God" (Supreme) "standeth in the congregation of the mighty. He judgeth among the Gods. How long will ye judge unjustly? I have said ye are Gods; and all of you children of the Most High.—But ye shall die like men; and fall like one of the princes." Good rulers in seats of power are entitled to worship

(obeisance) from those whom they protect. Thus, in fulfilment of Joseph's dream, his brethren, when he was Lord in Egypt, bowed down their heads and worshipped him.—Gen. xliii. 28. Here too, Joseph is Lord. "As Peter was coming in Cornelius fell down at his feet and worshipped him."—Acts, x. 25. David having conferred the throne upon Solomon, all the congregation "bowed down their heads, and worshipped the LORD and the king."—I. Chron. xxix. 20. Here the self same word in the self same place, means two things, viz: offering supreme homage to Jehovah, and inferior homage to king Solomon.—(Appendix B.)

Hence, in obtaining the precise meaning of a word, we must examine the very passage where it occurs. We do similarly in conversation. We catch the meaning, and the various shades of meaning, almost without effort. But that we may understand the scriptures, we need not scruple to use effort and care, when these are necessary. For in searching that we may know what instruction God meant to impart in any passage; it is not enough that we have a scriptural truth in our minds. We would know the meaning of the very passage under consideration; and see if the truth we contemplate, be the very truth intended in this very passage. It ought never to satisfy a preacher or his hearers, that he takes a text and preaches true things. He should develop the very truths of the text in hand. Otherwise, the confusion of his own mind will render his hearers doubly confounded. Ezra the scribe "read in the book in the law of God distinctly, and gave the sense; and caused the congregation to understand the reading."—Neh. viii. 8.

If we place a word of various import in a human creed, and there give it a fixed meaning, and repeat the creed



continually in the ears of the people; that meaning will be suggested to their minds, whenever they read that word in the bible. The consequence will be, they can never understand the bible; nor make sense of what they read. Words, even the word God, has sundry meanings.

The angel said to Mary, "The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore, also, that holy thing which shall be born of thee, shall be called the Son of God."—Luke, i. 35.—That "holy thing" was the created nature of Jesus Christ.

In the course of his preaching, Jesus claimed to be the "Son of God." On this, the Jews falsely said, "Thou being a man, makest thyself God."—John, x. 33. Jesus virtually denies the truth of their malevolent assertion: but shews them from their scriptures, that though he was a man, yet as a prophet sent by his Father, he might have assumed the title God. But as matter of fact, he had not assumed it. "Jesus answered them, Is it not written in your law, I said, Ye are Gods? If then he called them Gods unto whom the word of God came; say ye of him whom the Father hath sanctified and sent into the world, Thou blasphemest; because I said, I am the Son of God?" As if he had said, "Your hatred prompts you to accuse me, contrary to truth, as having claimed to be God. I assumed only the title, Son of God. And had I, as an inspired man, assumed the title God, it would have been unexceptionable. For prophets are so called in your scriptures. How unjust then is your charge of blasphemy for assuming the lower title, 'Son of God.'"

As "sent of God," he had a just claim to the title God; as we learn from this passage. He had a higher character, and higher claims to the title God; which he warily

concealed as yet, lest they should kill him before the time.—(Appendix C.)

If I have wandered from the proposition, viz: “*The scriptures are explicit in asserting the Unity of God;*” it is that I may not be misunderstood.

When I assert that God is One; I intend God Supreme, as contradistinguished from the Gods of the heathen, which are vanity and a lie; and as contradistinguished from earthly rulers and judges, who die like men; and as contradistinguished from prophets whom Jehovah hath sanctified and sent unto the world; and as contradistinguished from the true body and reasonable soul of Jesus, the “holy child” born of Mary, and begotten of God. The Son of God was a man of sorrows, and died on the cross. His soul descended into hell (hades, rendered hell in Acts ii. 27, and 31; and in Ps. xvi. 10.); and his body was laid in the tomb. He, though “The Son of the Highest;” and though “he must in all things have the preeminence;” was created by “The Power of the Highest, The Holy Ghost which overshadowed Mary.”

The Great God, who is One and Supreme, hath no Father: and is Son to no Father in heaven above, or on earth beneath. He is himself Eternal: The Father, and Law-giver of all worlds. Of his own will, and according to his own pleasure, he rules the immensity of created beings. He always maintains his royal State; and supports the majesty of his Divinity. He never lowers himself, for a moment, to act in subordination to another. Every created intelligent being, on whatever world he is placed, may look up towards his throne; and say, O my God! But Jehovah saith, “My God,” to no one. He is sent on no mission. He is appointed to no official station. It would be impiety to say to him, Thy God hath appointed thee to

an office. It would be like attempting to tear him from his throne ; and rank him with creatures under a Superior.

The Holy One is the uncontrollable Superior of all other beings, however great or small : however near to us, or remote on worlds at illimitable distance. On his good pleasure alone, depend their existence and their endless destination. "Who shall not fear before thee!"

The created nature of Jesus Christ is The Son of God ; whom the Father "hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds ; who when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high ; being made so much better than angels as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they:" i. e. "The Son:" "My Son."—Heb. i. 2, 3, 5. Through his mouth, the in-dwelling Divinity speaks ; has spoken from the beginning ; and will speak. "His name is therefore called The Word of God." He is The Son ; not The Father : The Humanity ; not The Divinity : "The Image of the invisible God ;" not "The invisible God." He was made a curse for us, by hanging on a tree : "was dead, and is alive."

The Eternal God had no origin : was not begotten : was not born : is not servant, angel, or messenger. He is not a man. He never received a law ; nor acted a subordinate part. He never suffered : was never poor ; and never died. He never for a moment laid aside his perfections : but has revealed his wrath from heaven against all who will not acknowledge him as God. He never veiled his glories : nor allowed excuse to those who remain ignorant of them. He never made himself of no reputation : and he damns wicked men for treating him with disregard. He exalteth himself on high : and commandeth all worlds



to magnify him. The clouds of adversity and sorrow roll infinitely beneath him. He liveth from everlasting, and forever; and is without variableness or shadow of change. **HIM** the scriptures declare to be **ONE**.

## REASON II.

*Not one passage of Scripture says that God is Three.*—(Appendix D.)

IF any one please to ask, what I mean to qualify by the numeral three? I readily answer; three any thing which the querist pleases. I mean, that scripture does not say that God is three at all. We read not in any one passage that God is three Gods: or, three beings: or, three united spirits: or, three percipient agents; sending, or being sent: or, three living divinities: or, three associates counselling together, and speaking with one another: or, three equal agents sustaining different offices, or any offices: or, three persons equal in power and glory; or, three economically unequal: or, three equals consenting to be subordinate to one another.

Either of these, I suppose, would be three persons. But not one passage says that God is three persons: or, three one: or, three substances; or three in one substance: or, three in mode, and not three in essence: or triune: or, trinity: or, three in his nature or being. He is not said to have been eternally three; nor to have become three in time. Nothing is said of his essence, unless it be implied in the expression, "God is a Spirit." The numeral adjective three is not once in scripture applied to him in any

sense. Whereas the numeral one is applied to him in passages not a few. He is characterized in the bible as "THE HOLY ONE:" but never as "The sacred three."

If the enquirer think the scripture language may be improved; and say, that God is three: I have an equal right to ask him what he means: three what?

If he say, three Ab-ra-ca-da-bra: I may ask him what he means by Ab-ra-ca-da-bra? If he answer, *I do not know. It is an inscrutable mystery:* I may not tell him he is dishonestly imposing upon me. This would seem uncivil.

I ask him therefore whether he finds Ab-ra-ca-da-bra in the bible? He may answer, *No: but the same thing in meaning and substance runs through the whole bible: and I must suspect your religion is vain; and that you are on the high road to perdition because you do not believe it.* I certainly ought not to hold that man in contempt; whether he be a wise and apparently pious man in other respects, or not. For such unmeaning sounds have been held in reverence by millions of men: expressive of what they have deemed sacred mysteries.

If instead of this, he answer, *God is three one: triune: or three divine and equal persons:* I am just as unenlightened as before: if to the question What do you mean by three persons? he says, *My answer is, I do not know.* I have the same opinion of his honesty and wisdom, as before. Neither three Ab-ra-ca-da-bra, nor three persons in God, are found in the bible. And no man knows what they are. And neither of them furnish the least aid in obtaining the meaning of any one passage in the bible. If so, I must think their importance overrated.

I have introduced the cabalistical syllables Ab-ra-ca-da-bra, merely to illustrate my meaning: not to make any theorist ridiculous; however unmeaning his creed. I am

not disposed to levity while treating on these subjects. I hold no heretic in contempt; whether he be christian, Jew, or pagan. However obscured by his prejudices, or sullied by folly or sin; he has an immortal soul for which Christ died. And if my prayers are specifically answered; he and I will be saved, side by side, by the same Grace: and we may be intimately associated in learning the wonderful works of God; and in discovering the glories of his anointed Son. Indeed, he may be appointed to do more towards expanding my intellect, and raising my affections; than I, in aiding his. He may condescendingly guide my views; and I joyfully yield precedence to him, millions of ages hence. I can hardly ask more for myself, or less for him, than that it may be so.

I repeat: "not one passage of scripture says that God is three." Here I might stop. I have no passage to appeal to, on the subject of God's being three. For there is no passage in the bible on the subject. How am I to prove this negative proposition? If it were admitted as good evidence that God is *not three*, that the bible says he is *one*; the task would be easy.

To find that God is three; three equal persons; or triune: we must go to the creeds of men; to the speculations of the fathers; to the ancient Jews; and to the mythology of heathens. We must reverse Paul's rule, who says, "We speak not in the words which *man's* wisdom teacheth; but which the *Holy Ghost* teacheth."—I. Cor. ii. 13.

The venerable Dr. Dwight treats on the trinity, in Vol. 6, sermon 71. He admits in the beginning of his sermon that "the proof of this doctrine must unquestionably be derived from the scriptures alone."

The purest protestants have been forward in maintaining that the bible is the only rule of faith and practice.



For they observed that while men revered the canons of the church, and acknowledged legislative power in ecclesiastics; the world was overspread with an artificial christianity. Religion was a mere thing of wax in the hands of ministers, which they could twist and shape into any form they pleased. It was then arrayed in purple, and decked in gold; and had on its forehead the name "Mystery: Mother of harlots." And this is not fancy, but historical fact.

The word of God differs widely from the dogmas of men. God knows: and is of a rectitude which will not deceive. Men are ignorant, selfish, and imperfectly to be trusted; all over the world, through all ages since the fall of man. In every order of men, selfishness points to some interest of self; as steadily an the needle to the pole. The clergy make creeds which partake of the imperfection of their authors: and they have no authority to bind the consciences of men. Every man must receive the law at the mouth of Christ; and give personally account of himself to God. Says John, "Beloved, believe not every spirit: but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world."—I. John, iv. 1. And the church at Ephesus was commended for this reason: "Thou hast tried them which say they are apostles and are not; and hast found them liars."—Rev. ii. 2. They must have tried them by the word.

If, then, any sincere enquirer would know what Christianity is; let him search, not in the great world around him; not in the catholic, the episcopalian, the presbyterian, and the baptist church; but in the bible: as Dr. Dwight says, "unquestionably in the scriptures alone." This rendered "the Bereans more noble than those in Thessalonica."—Acts, xvii.

“Pontiffs, priests, and ministers, distributed into different classes, presided over pagan worship. The sacerdotal order was supposed to be distinguished by an immediate intercourse with the Gods. And it abused its authority in the basest manner to deceive an ignorant and wretched people.”—Adams’ view of Rel. p. 12.

This account of things in pagan countries, is more or less applicable (if history deserves the least credit) to all national establishments; and indeed to all sects, during all the ages which have rolled away. The reason is, man has continued to be man; in whatever garb; under whatever profession. “Thus saith the LORD; cursed is the man that trusteth in man. Blessed is the man that trusteth in the LORD.”

Notwithstanding the declaration of Dr. Dwight, in the sermon alluded to, that “the proof of the doctrine of the trinity must be derived from the scriptures alone:” the sermon itself has this title, viz: “Testimonies to the doctrine of the trinity from the ancient christians, Jews, and heathens.”

He admits that “it is a doctrine of an extraordinary nature:” and that if we had now first discovered it in the scriptures; “we should be inclined to doubt the soundness of our interpretation; if we found the Jews construing certain passages in the old testament, and the early christians in the new, in a manner totally different from ours. We should, I think, suspect our own mode of construction. Nor is the testimony even of heathens concerning this subject to be disregarded.”

I should be much for going along with the Doctor, as not behind in veneration; if what he urges, firmly to persuade my willing faith, did not dissuade me most; and seem to cast ominous conjecture on the whole success:

when he who much excels in mental strength, mistrustful of scripture alone, grounds his hope, at least in part, on pagan fables, Jewish fictions, and the platonic mysteries of the early fathers.

“The doctrine,” he says, “lies wholly out of the course, I think I may say, out of the reach of human thought.” I, too, believe that no thought has yet reached it; nor any man had a conception what the doctrine is; as it is held forth to the people, and received by them. And, I apprehend that the bible furnishes no aid to the mind which tries to reach it. Yet I make the bible my creed, for the further following reasons.

The Jews who embraced the gospel in the apostolic age, were nevertheless zealous of their abrogated law; and mingled their old traditions with their christianity: thus corrupting the gospel.—Acts, xxi. 20. Paul labors in his epistles to correct this evil.

And it is equally well known that those who were converted to the gospel from the gentile world, brought along with them, much of their heathen philosophy; and incorporated this into their christianity. For centuries, they were not free from the mysteries and sophisms of Plato; and the allegories of the philosophical sects, venerated by their pagan ancestors.

During 325 years, christians were cruelly persecuted by their pagan emperors, and governors. So long, however, they were zealous and active in turning men away from demons and idols; and raising their worship to the Holy One, who made heaven and earth, the sea and the dry land: cheering them with good hope through the mediatorial reign of his glorified Son. And God gave witness to their tidings; and by his resistless power, caused the dead to hear and live. Those early and persecuted



disciples covered nearly as wide an extent of the earth with christianity, as our present christendom. Since that period christianity has moderately progressed to the West; but has lost territory on the East. Judea, and the North of Africa, and Asia Minor, where the early churches flourished, are chiefly occupied by the followers of Mahomet. The early christians, thousands of whom were of Israel, did more in extending the faith, while the powers of the earth set themselves against them; than all christians and their missionaries have done since. So numerous were christians in Asia and Europe and Africa, in the fourth century, that the emperor Constantine found it convenient to profess the faith.

And it is clear that until this time, no church had a Confession of Faith, setting forth three persons in God: or three equal agents in the substance of the Godhead: or that God is divisible into persons equal in power and glory: or that there are three physical or philosophical distinctions in the nature of God, rendering him triune, triple, or threefold. Nor did one of them profess what is now professed in all our orthodox churches as the orthodox faith.

The early fathers appear to have had no uniform or well defined ideas, when they wrote of the pre-existent soul of Christ; the Archangel, Logos, or Word of God. Their writings indeed have been so corrupted, that we cannot pronounce what they originally were. "Where," says Rev. Dr. Brownlee, "can the universal consent of the fathers be found? Not on the pages of their endless contradictions. As for traditions and oral laws, we will treat them with the same respect as we do the Koran of Mahomet. As for the fathers of the greek and latin churches; I will receive their pages with veneration as soon as the catholic church shall produce a genuine copy of them,

purged from the scandalous alterations and corruptions made in them by the monks of the dark ages."

When the potentates of the earth ceased to uphold idolatry by the sword, they took sides with the christians; and helped forward the great apostacy or "falling away."—They convoked councils of bishops. These councils formed creeds: and emperors enforced them on their subjects. Few of the people could read or write. Preachers avaricious and guileful every where arose. In the eastern church, controversies spring up, and parties denounced each other as heretics. Hence frequent councils, to and from which, contentious prelates were continually riding post, that they might bring every thing to their own will and interest. In the western church, contests for the episcopal seat at Rome, were carried on by bribes and violence and murder. The successful occupants enriched by the presents of matrons; by their credit at court; by the credulity of devotees; and by thrusting their rapacious hands into every man's pocket; went abroad in their chariots and sedans; feasting sumptuously, and imitating the luxury of princes. Doctrine and morals being corrupted in the clergy; the people followed the general depravity. Primitive churches, primitive pastors, primitive humility and love and zeal, gave place to ANTICHRIST. The church became a worldly sanctuary, avaricious, persecuting, bloody. A few faithful "witnesses prophesied in sack-cloth."

Through succeeding ages of monkish bigotry and popish fraud, religion was further corrupted from the simplicity of Christ. The pretended ministers, on whom the people blindly depended for permission to enter heaven, upheld the thrones of monarchs: and monarchs in their turn, showered on them the treasures of their empires.—

The christianity found in the bible was illy adapted to the purpose of extracting from their flocks, a sufficient support for such a clergy ; or for exciting the reverence they desired. They finally disallowed the reading of the bible by the people. Children were asked by their catechists, "What do you believe?" Answer, "I believe whatever holy mother roman catholic church has taught and believed." And the belief was artfully inculcated; The cause of Christ, the destruction of heretics, the support of priests; these Three are One.

Paul, with the spirit of prophecy, foresaw this Antichrist : and said to the Colossians, "Beware, lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world; and not after Christ." He taught that the reign of Christ on earth, and "the gathering together" of all nations unto him, "shall not come, except there be a falling away first; and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; who as God, setteth in the temple of God, shewing that he is God," as to authority to make Articles of faith, and Rules of discipline: "even him whose coming is after the working of satan, with power and signs and lying wonders; and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness: whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming."—II. Thess. ii.—(Appendix E.)

I have yet another reason for giving but little heed to "the ancient fathers, Jews, and heathens." The more we read ancient history, the more we are impressed with the contrast between ancient darkness, and present light: and we are urged to go forward, and not backward. Ancient history is of great value. Yet no intelligent man reads it, without rejecting many of its records as fabulous; and



doubting of many others ; and becoming tired of the absurdities and ignorance and crimes which he is obliged to review. Since printing, and the mariners compass, and the discovery of America ; men have been more improved in arts, and science, and mental independence ; than during the preceding 4000 years.

Of the “testimonies to the doctrine of the trinity from the ancient christians,” cited by Dr. Dwight ; most of them indicate the union of God and Man, and the pre-existence of the soul of the Messiah : doctrines which I advocate : and not one of them teaches that God is three persons equal in power and glory. One of them is Theophilus bishop of Antioch, anno 181.

He says, “The three days before the heavenly luminaries, represent the trinity ; God, and his word, and his wisdom.” Now this is no mystery : not three persons. It implies that God is One. All christians believe in “God, and his word, and his wisdom.” This intelligible scheme may be ranked with the schemes of those whom Watts denominates *modal trinitarians*. And I here say once for all, that I object not to them ; if expressed in a lucid manner : nor to those schemes of trinity professed by some of the protestant churches at the reformation, denominated *analogical* ; if intelligibly expressed.

The schemes of *real trinitarians*, are those I deem unscriptural ; baleful to the understanding ; deceptive ; and of malign influence on christian practice : as that God in his being has three physical distinctions which are unknowable : that he is three persons equal in power and glory : three intelligent agents who send and are sent : three equals who are economically subordinate to one another : three holding different offices by mutual assignment : in fine, all such schemes as are mystical and inexplicable :

such as are intentionally so constructed as to “render the meaning obscure; and not only obscure, but unintelligible; and not only unintelligible, but utterly lost in the strangeness of the phraseology.”

Dr. Dwight quotes Origen who lived anno 230. “Origen says, When we come to the grace of baptism, we acknowledge One God only, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.” How does this teach three persons, when he expressly says, “We acknowledge One God only?” as if he would guard the unthinking against the belief of three persons, from the three names used in the form of baptism. He probably knew that the One God The Father is a Spirit or Ghost, and the sanctifier of saints. He may have known that The Son is the “apostle and high priest of our profession whom God has made both Lord and Christ:” that God is united to him; dwells in him; speaks through his mouth; makes him his Logos. Whether Origen’s views of this matter were very clear, may be doubted. We shall quite mistake, if we imagine that the theological ideas of any of the fathers were very accurate.—Professor Stewart says, “They involved themselves in more than a Cretan Labyrinth, by undertaking to defend the eternal generation of the Son.” One thing is certain. The doctrine that God is three persons equal in power and glory, cannot be found in any one of the fathers, till more than 300 years after Christ.

Dr. Dwight cites Justin Martyr, who declares “that Christ *the first born word* of God, is Lord and God, as being the Son of God; and that he was the God of Israel.”—The next sentence, I think, shews that this father had some notion of the distinction between the created and uncreated natures in the person of Christ. “We adore and love the *unbegotten and invisible God.*” Here this father

describes the invisible God as *unbegotten*. The Holy One is truly *unbegotten and unborn and invisible*. But Justin calls the Son, *the first born word of God*. And it is true that the son was *begotten and born and visible*. The distinction further appears in the next sentence. "Him (The Father,) and that *Son who hath proceeded from him*, and the prophetic spirit" (the power which moved the prophets) "we worship and adore." This is correct theology: and as correctly expressed, as could be expected in any of the ancient fathers.

Justin further declares that "more than one divine person is denoted by the phrase, *The man is become like one of us*: and that one of them is Christ."

It is a clear truth that the pre-existent spirit of Christ was the ancient Logos; and was the speaker who said, "Let us make man, in our likeness;" and who said, "The man is become as one of us."

With this also agree the words of Hermas, a companion of the apostles themselves. From Hermas, the Doctor thus quotes. "The Son of God was more ancient than any creature; seeing he *was present with the Father* at the creation of the world." This apostolical father here expresses pure apostolical truth. But the attempt to find three equal persons in God in the discourses of this companion of the apostles, or of Justin Martyr; would be as vain, as to look for them in the discourses of Christ or of Paul.

Again from Dr. Dwight. "Theophilus declares, that Christ, assuming τὸ Πρῶτον του πατρὸς, the face, or form of God; came to paradise, and conversed with Adam."—This is true bible divinity; as we shall shew in the sequel. But Theophilus knew nothing of the Sacred Three. He was two centuries too early for this mystery.



Again: "Athenagoras says, the Νῆς καὶ λογος of God, is the Son of God." Λογος (Logos) means reason or wisdom, as it exists in God or man. It also means *word*, when it is designed to express the *manifestation* of the wisdom existing in the mind. \* It sometimes means a *declaration* of the wisdom or will of God. It sometimes means a word of *efficacious command*. And sometimes it is used personally; and denotes an intelligent being by whom as an instrument, God reveals his wisdom or performs his operations. In this last sense, Irenius uses it. "The Father of our Lord Jesus Christ is revealed to men by his Logos, Word; who is his Son. And he made all things by his Word.—John, i. 3., i. e. by Jesus Christ. For Paul says, Eph. iii. 9., God created all things by Jesus Christ." This is true..

It is hoped the reader who is unacquainted with the intricacies of language, will now understand why Christ is called Logos, The Word. For Logos means not only wisdom itself; but one that speaks it forth; or an instrument by which God effects the purposes of his wisdom.—Now we read, "No man knoweth who the Father is, except the Son; and he to whom the Son reveals him."—The Son is also the prime minister of the Father in ruling the kingdoms of his providence and grace. On these accounts the Son first obtained, and still retains the title Logos, The Word; or The Word of God.

God made known his will by the pre-existent soul of Christ. He was the Father's angel or messenger, in the long gone by ages. He also executed his Father's purposes. He was the angel who instructed Abraham, and destroyed Sodom. The name Logos was properly given to that angel who appeared to the patriarchs; and in whom was God's name; or God himself. (Appendix F.)

Christ, then, in his created nature, being “the angel of God’s presence ;” the revealer of his wisdom and perfections ; and the instrument of effecting his purposes ; was, and is called Logos, The Word. But while Jews and early christians and the penmen of the bible, call him the Word of God ; they never thought of first, second, and third persons, equal and eternal in God.

When they *figuratively* represent powers, attributes, and agencies, in a *personal manner* ; the thread of the discourse sufficiently manifests what was *literally* meant.—We all use figurative language : and properly ; if *intelligibly*. Unintelligible language frustrates the design of all language. None but guileful men can need it.

We may now understand why Athenagoras called the Son, The Logos, The Wisdom, or Word of God.

Athenagoras also says, “ We who preach God ; preach God the Father, God the Son, and the Holy Ghost : and the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost are one.” He may have meant one person ; agreeably to the opinion of Praxeas : or, he may have meant that the unbegotten Father and begotten Son were one in affection and purpose : or one by some personal union : and the Holy Ghost the same one God, sending forth his sacred influence, effectively to draw men to Christ : or he may have spoken into the air : as the ancients often did : and as the moderns often do.—Christ intelligibly said, “ I and my Father are one :” and all christians “ are one in us :” one in affection, aim and purpose. Besides ; Divinity and Humanity are one complex person and object of worship. Three equal persons would contradict the language of Athenagoras. He says, “ The Father, Son, and Holy Ghost are One ;” not Three.

We will now notice a few of the ancient Jews cited by Dr. Dwight. “ Philo who lived just before the birth of

our Savior, calls the Logos, the eternal Logos; and says, he is necessarily eternal: and the image of the invisible God."

Logos here cannot mean the attribute wisdom; but the personal agent who reveals it, viz: the pre-existent soul of Messiah. By "eternal," Philo may have meant that he was before the world; sometimes called "the days of eternity." At any rate, this is the meaning of many of the antients. And with our light, we know this was the true fact. In confirmation of this, He was "the image of the invisible God," says Philo the Jew. Paul says precisely the same thing. Col. i. 15., "Who is the image of the invisible God; the first born of every creature; and he is before all things."

The image of any being never is, nor can be, the being himself. Still less, if the image itself is invisible, as God is said to be. This would be physically impossible. To say, We behold the invisible image of the invisible God; and the invisible image is the invisible God, whose invisible image he is; would be both palpable absurdity and palpable falsehood. For the Logos was visible.—I. John, i. 1.

Further, Philo says, "He who is, is on each side attended by his nearest powers; of which (powers) one is creative, and the other kingly. The creative (power) is God, by which he founded the universe. The kingly (power) is Lord. He who is in the middle, being thus attended by both his powers, exhibits the appearance, sometimes of one, and sometimes of three." Be it so.—This is said of pure Divinity. This, then, is Philo's unpolished mode of teaching that God has his two powers of contriving and accomplishing his marvellous creation. This modal trinity leaves the Unity of God unimpeached.



Of the Logos, Philo says, "He who is begotten, imitating the ways of his Father, and observing his patterns, produces forms or things." This is said of the "begotten" created nature. And it much resembles what Christ said of himself: "Verily I say unto you, The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do: for what things soever he doeth, these doeth the Son likewise."—John, v. 19.

Of the Logos, he further says, "He is the manager of this world." And, "God governs all things according to the strictest justice, *having set over them*, his righteous Logos, his first begotten Son." This is interesting.—Whence should Philo the Jew obtain this? Probably from the 2, and 110 Psalms. "I have anointed my king upon my holy hill of Zion," &c.

Again, "Philo calls the Logos an angel; the name of God" (my name is in him, said Moses;) "a man; the beginning; the most ancient angel; the Archangel of many names; and the high priest of this world: and says, his head is anointed with oil."

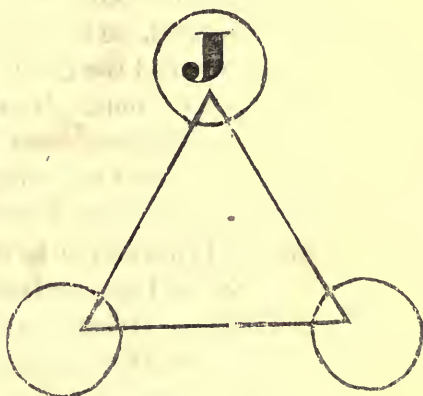
Really, this Jew seems better acquainted with the pre-existence and personal character of his expected Messiah, than many writers of the present day. He calls the Logos, "The Son of God; his first born; Prince of angels; prophet of God; light of the people; and more ancient than the world." He calls him the "most honorable Logos; who stands in the limits between the creature and the Creator; the eldest, the first begotten of the sons of God; who under God, governs the world; and who doth humbly mediate for us mortals with him who is immortal."—Watts, Vol. 6. p. 605.

This for a Jew, is admirable. Of the three equal persons he had never heard.



Once more from Dr. Dwight. "The equilateral Triangle, with three small circles at the angles, and the letter Jod inscribed over against the upper angle, was a Jewish symbol of the Deity."

For the sake of those unlearned in Trigonometry, I give the Diagram.



"The three sides," says Dr. Dwight (the Jews did not say so,) "indicated the three persons in the Godhead: and the equal length of the sides, their equality: while the Jod was a direct proof that Jehovah was intended by the emblem. The three circles *probably* denoted the perfection of the Three Persons."

Now, I think, a greater mathematician than Dr. Dwight, explaining this figure, might say, it probably denoted something else. Here are indeed Three points in the Triangle; Three equal sides; Three equal angles; and Three equal circles: more than a trinity of trinities.—They may denote twelve persons, or nine, or Three. If we conceive of God as triform, triple, triangular, and tri-lateral; this will help us to the meaning of trinity and tri-une. The whole Triangle is One. The sides are Three.

If the Jews ever did use this figure as "A symbol of the Deity," they violated the express laws of their God. He

forbid the attempt to bring the invisible Intelligence within the range of our senses. If they represented him by a Triangle, or made him triune ; they were not far from idolatry. Whoever will attempt to do this for a moment . . . and then reflect on his conceptions . . . will perceive that the God he contemplated, extended but a few yards around him : that he obscured the glory of the infinite Jehovah : and debased his own mind. That a single Jew from Moses to Christ ever believed that God is three equal persons, or trinity, we have no evidence. If ever there was such a Jew ; his belief was founded on no passage of the old testament. From Christ to the present day, the Jews have maintained the Unity of God ; and deny that their ancestors ever held to a trinity in God. And the pretence that their denial results from their hatred of christianity, would not seem very candid : would not be countenanced by history : would not, I think, be true.

The Doctor proceeds : "Another method used by the Jews to denote God, was, to include in a square, three Radii, disposed in the form of a crown. The crown *seems* to have denoted the dignity and supremacy of the object designed : the number three (radii,) the three persons in the Godhead."

It may be so. Far more probably it was not so. The Jews never said so. At any rate, these Radii are less striking than Virgil's. Virgil describes the cyclops with their forges in Ætna, forming a thunderbolt : such as Omnipotent Father (Jupiter) hurls on the earth. The thunderbolt on which he viewed them at work, had one part already polished off. On this part were

"Three Radii of wreathed hail :

Three, of watery cloud : and

Three of glaring fire and winged wind."

Here again is a trinity of trinities: which, we may conjecture, represents the three persons in the Godhead of Jupiter. They may, however, represent the seasons; or something else.

We may now respectfully accompany the Doctor with his "testimonies to the trinity from the heathens." Here he will be more successful. Not in Jewish, but in pagan antiquity, we may descry some glimpses of the doctrine.

"The name of God among the Hindoos, is Brachme.—The names of the three persons in the Godhead" (the Doctor's language, not the language of the Hindoos themselves) "are Brachma, Veeshnu, and Seeva. The three faces of Brachma, Veeshnu, and Seeva, they always formed on one body, having six hands. This method of delineating the Godhead, is ancient beyond tradition; and carved every where in their places of worship."

Again, "The Diana of the Romans is stamped on a medal, as having three faces on three distinct heads, united to one form. On the reverse, is the image of a man, holding his hand to his lips; under whom, is this inscription: Be silent: it is a Mystery."

This, too, was a threeheaded monster. The worshippers, too, were taught not to be very inquisitive. For it was a "Mystery." The hierophants knew that scrutiny would be fatal to their gains.

Once more from the Doctor. "The Egyptians acknowledged a triad; Osiris, Isis, and Typhon. These persons they denoted by the symbols, light, fire, and a serpent. They represented them on the doors and other parts of their sacred buildings, in the figures of a globe, a wing, and a serpent;" or snake.

"One of the Egyptian fundamental axioms of theology, is, There is one principle of all things, praised under the



name of the Unknown Darkness ; and this thrice repeated."

"Unknown Darkness" is indeed an appropriate appellation of the MYSTERY as still set forth.

Osiris and Isis, adored in Egypt, were the sun and moon. They also worshipped the ox, the dog, the hawk, the cat, the crocodile, leeks and onions, and almost every thing but the One God.—Rollin's An. Hist. Vol. 1. p. 129, 130.

The priests had possession of the sacred books. These contained the policy of the government ; as well as the Mysteries of Religion. The priests had the care of the consciences of the kings. And so it has been in all nations. Both the political and religious secrets were involved in symbols and enigmas. The reverential wonder of the vulgar was strongly excited. The figure of Harpocrates in the sanctuaries, with his finger upon his mouth, intimated mysteries not to be explored by the multitude. Pyramids, and temples were emblazoned with hieroglyphics. There were figures unintelligible to the vulgar.—There were birds, and beasts, and creeping things. All couched a hidden meaning. And when God brought out Israel ; instead of saying,

Remember an Egyptian Trinity :

He commanded them,

"Defile not yourselves with the idols of Egypt."—Eze. xx. 7.

A man of discerning mind, like Lucian, though a heathen, could see through the tricks and mystical illusions practiced on the multitude. "You enter," says Lucian, "a magnificent temple, every part of which glitters with gold and silver. You look attentively for a God : and are cheated with an ape, a stork, or a cat : a just emblem of too many palaces ; the kings in which are far from being the brightest ornaments in them."



Such a man could estimate the motives of the priests who swayed the credulous Ephesians, when they “worshipped the great Goddess Diana, and the image which fell down from Jupiter.”—Acts, xix. 35.

However heathens have carved images with three heads on one body; or portrayed them on their temples; they were vanities which we deplore. The priests and priestesses alone were profited. Their Gods and Goddesses, their demons and demigods, were monsters of imagination. That may be said of all their Deities, which Paul said of their Idols; “We know that they are nothing in the world: and that there is none other God but One.”—I. Cor. viii. 4. This brings us back to our Bible. And here, God is One; not three, nor thirty thousand as with the Greeks and Romans.

## REASON III.

*The works of God, as a revelation, proclaim his Unity.*

“THE works of the Lord are great; sought out of all those who have pleasure in them.”—Ps. cxi. 2. These works will eternally remain; a revelation to all the un-fallen inhabitants dispersed among them: and they would be read with delight by us, did we “like to retain God in our knowledge.”

All human sciences have for their object, the development of every thing knowable concerning these works.—And every branch of this knowledge adds something to the grand display of the wondrous Contriver. God who knows, is determined that he will be known: known by his marvellous acts: known through the earth; as well as by principalities and powers in heavenly places.

The connections apparent in his works; their invariable tendency to good; and the order and beauty which reign through their vast amplitude; suggest One Infinite Intelligence superintending the whole.

The minutest particle of mind or of matter, hath relations with the whole; and the whole acts on all its parts. There are indications that all things with the nicest adjustment, are in a state of progression: rising to something more perfect. The mineral kingdom lays the foundation for the vegetable; the vegetable for the animal; youth for manhood; life for immortality. No limits can be set to the advances which one new born infant will make in the endless following ages. Thirty millions of these immor-

tals begin on earth every year. They are delighted with the novelty of existence. They swell the catalogue of Adam's race, and of God's subjects.

Independently of scripture, we should conjecture that the scene of God's works will not end: that we are on the threshold of a vast scheme which stretches forward to eternity: and that all things were adjusted beforehand with a view to the amazing whole.

We have no evidence that one particle of matter which God has created ever was or will be annihilated. On the contrary, that new worlds and systems may eternally be lunched from the hand of Omnipotence and that the mighty voids may be replenished with more dense habitations for new and social communities; are deductions of reason, from what we know of the great Jehovah.

God did not breathe into man, and make him a living soul; till he had prepared a world for him, surrounded with light; and a visible creation on which he could employ his powers. Nor have we evidence that he ever created any other order of intelligences, till he had prepared them habitations. And should the earth and sun and material creation go out of existence, and "not leave a wreck behind;" all created minds would, so far as we can judge, either perish; or, be thrown out of business; and be bewildered in everlasting night. The resurrection bodies of saints and of Christ would be lost. And should their spirits survive; the means of their instruction which the bible uses, would be gone forever.

We are taught indeed that the earth and surrounding atmosphere, defiled by a race who have left their first estate, will be burned; and melt with fervent heat. "Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look" for their renovation with augmented splendor.—II. Pet. iii. 12, 13., Rev. xxi.



From eternity God was, what he is and will be. From eternity, he had the power of creating and governing worlds and persons. And no revelation he has given us, says, that he did not from eternity, exert that power.

The infinity of God's perfections, and the infinity of local extension in which he displays them; present fields in which we may forever expatiate: and from which we may derive instruction to all eternity: and to all eternity remain infinitely beneath the transcendent Divinity.

The bible contains a partial history of the formation of this world and of the nether heavens; and of man, and other beings visible and invisible who have special correspondence with us. "Lo, these are parts of his ways: but how small a portion" compared with the whole!—Job, xxvi, 14.

We look at so small an object as a rose. We analyze this flower: and it is wonderful in its texture, its colors, its fragrance, and the influence it receives from, and imparts to surrounding objects. View it with a microscope; and it swarms with organized and happy beings. They have connection with their habitation; and their habitation is connected with us. The subject as we examine it, becomes complex. There must be atmosphere, and agitation of air, and solar light. So that this flower has connections with all the terrestrial elements; and bears a relation to the vast globe of the sun. So that an energy exerted at the distance of 95,000,000 of miles, and a motion of 200,000 miles every second of time in the particles of light, are necessary to the pleasures of the animalculæ in the rose; and to the flowering of the rose itself. And these are some of the ends for which the sun was created. There is here no mistake. For when we know to what use God puts a thing which he has made, we know this was his design when he made it.

The earth being related to the sun; and the sun to all surrounding objects; we and morning stars, and insects and seraphs, bear a relation to unnumbered worlds; and to the myriads of beings who occupy them. Does it not follow that One Intelligence organized these small and those great portions of existence? and makes them co-operate in results, perfect as heaven, and harmonious as the music of the spheres? Should we feel safe, if divers divinities ruled the parts? when the least jar in their plans would disarrange the whole!

God is a Ghost invisible: a Spirit whom no man hath seen, nor to eternity will see (literally.) The boundless universe which his hands have formed, visibly demonstrate his eternal power and Godhead. Do our minds in the contemplation feel any need of the figure three? So far as his works adumbrate their Author, we discern the grandeur of the Eternal One.

Moments and ages and eternity have their connective relations. "An event apparently trivial forms a link in that chain of events which extends from the beginning of time to the consummation of the present state; which runs through a thousand worlds; and stretches into eternity. Some of the most appalling scenes of terror and destruction, have proceeded from an accident so inconsiderable as to be nearly overlooked."—Vid. Dick's Phil. of Rel.

Thus on pouring the contents of a phial into the air; there have followed voices, and thunders, and lightnings, and a great earthquake; and the cities of the nations have fallen.—Rev. xvi. 17. We here feel our impotence. The LORD reigneth: let the earth rejoice: let the multitude of Isles be glad. He fills immensity. He securely manages the motes in the air, and the armies in heaven. No one can stop his hand. He has no equal: is bounded by

no triangle : is distributed into no family of persons : has no resemblance to an idol. The very thought contracts our souls ; bewilders our powers ; shuts up our heart in pigmy self. For in proportion as we diminish God in our esteem, we magnify the idol self.

Uninstructed men are not accustomed to look through the vast expanse of nature, swarming with worlds and living beings. They regard infinite space as an infinite void.

View the naked savage standing on the beach, revering the ocean as an angry Deity. He retires to a volcano ; and this too is a God. Unacquainted with the long train of causes and effects which stretches through all duration ; he constantly witnesses events for which he cannot account. And in his imagination, he peoples the hills, and vallies, and earth, and air, with Gods and genii, and demons, and invisible agents.

How great the difference between this savage, and the polished inhabitants of Europe ; when, about 350 years ago, printing was discovered. Yet were the inhabitants of Europe 350 years ago, scarcely midway in intelligence between that naked savage, and the improved society of the present day. The repetition of unmeaning words, and assenting to mysteries not understood, were required of timid souls who dared not think for themselves. This state of things cannot last. The course of time bears society along to eminences, whence their prospects brighten as they expand. An improved population cast off their fetters, and look abroad for themselves ; not satisfied with magical forms without substance : magical words without ideas : magical ceremonies without knowledge and understanding.

“Our conceptions of God will nearly correspond with the knowledge we acquire of the extent of his operations.”



The discoveries of modern astronomy shew us the planets in their vast movements; with a centrifugal force impressed upon them by the Almighty, when first he set them in their courses: and one uniform attraction holds them in their circuits round their respective suns. The globe on which we dwell, moves round our sun in a circle of 595 millions of miles, every year: and accomplishes its journey without variation, from age to age. When we look on the midnight sky, we behold a thousand suns diffusing their splendors from regions immeasurably distant. We apply a telescope to a small portion of the vast concave; and at once perceive a thousand more. All these pass over the instrument in seven or eight minutes; and are succeeded by as many more. "When we increase the magnifying powers of the instrument, we descry other orbs of light stretching still farther into the depths of space." These ponderous masses with the worlds which they illumine, reach to depths infinitely extended; and are on all sides around us. They are as entirely without limits, as eternity is without limits; as God is without limits. Beyond all which telescopes can reach, are boundless regions, where wonders of skill and power and benevolence are displayed through the empire of Jehovah.

How wonderful this God of boundless might! How excellent in power and glory! Are there two other "percipient agents" equal to him in power and glory? With our understanding expanded, as we view God's works; do we ever think of applying the number three to the Divine Architect? Never. Do we call the boundless God, "triune"? Do we think of triangles and squares and radii? Never. Are we reminded of the pagan with his chisel and hammer, carving from the rock a monstrous body with three heads and three faces? No, never, never.

And yet, these expanded views of God's *works*, we take in obedience to God's *word*. And his word excludes the adjective *equal*, and every plural number of persons. Isai. xl. 25, 26.—“To whom will ye liken me? or to whom shall I be equal? saith the HOLY ONE.” Not “the sacred three” equal in power and glory: but the Holy One, with no “equal.” “Lift up your eyes on high, and behold! who hath created these orbs? and bringeth forth their host by number? HE calleth them all by their names, by the greatness of his might: for he is strong in power.”—This brings us back again to the bible; which like the book of nature, exalts the HOLY ONE. (Appendix F.)

## REASON IV.

*The works of God, give no intimation that God is three.*

HAD man kept his first estate, and replenished the earth with a race bearing the image of God; the surrounding creation would probably have been our principal Revelation. Nor should we have found the least difficulty in "finding that he is not far from every one of us; and that we are also his offspring."—Acts, xvii. In a world adorned with luxurious grandeur; surrounded with our Maker's wonders in the firmament of his power; full of pleasure in our intellectual and corporeal existence; disinterested in temper; conscious that we originated nothing of all we saw and knew and were; creation would have been one joyous temple, full of God.

We can, if we please, transport ourselves in imagination, to one of the greater globes in our solar system: and with highest probability suppose the inhabitants unfallen. They may be as superior to our primitive ancestors, as their globe is superior to ours. The natural scenery with which they are surrounded; the organization of their corporeal frames: their employments and relations with one another; may differ from those which obtain in our terrestrial sphere.

In God's works, are uniformity and variety. No two men are exactly alike in form, countenance and mental powers. No two animals, or trees of the forest are precisely similar.



Diversities in whole orders of beings, both intellectual and sensitive, will be found on the worlds dispersed through immensity. These will be learned and understood by those who "delight themselves in the Almighty:" and we hope by us; while we measure with our existence the long tracts of eternity.

One principle of attraction pervades all material worlds. The same light emanates from, or gilds them all. The solar and stellar rays have the same laws of reflection and refraction; and paint the same colors. The inhabitants of those worlds regard the same general laws in pursuing their pleasures, which are applicable to ours. Intelligence is the same in them, in us, and in God. Holiness is the same on earth, and in the heaven of heavens. The numberless orders of intelligent beings can have no firm concord, unless disinterested love reigns among them; as attraction reigns among their globes.

Doubts have indeed been expressed, whether those worlds are inhabited at all.

We reason thus. All material things are wielded by intelligent minds; and are made subservient to their enjoyment. As far as we know, all nature swarms with living beings. Myriads of worlds are as great, and far greater than ours. In view of their suitableness to furnish habitations, and to be abodes of boundless delight; and in view of the wisdom, of him who made them such: his intention that they should be occupied, is fairly indicated.

We nevertheless prefer bible evidence, if it can be obtained. See Isai. xlv. 18.—"Thus saith Jehovah who created the heavens; God himself who formed the earth and made it: he hath established it: he created it not in vain; he formed it to be inhabited. I am Jehovah and there is none else."

In saying "there is none else;" he says there are no other uncreated persons, besides the person speaking, and using the first personal pronoun, "I." In saying, "He created the earth not in vain, He formed it to be inhabited;" He contrasts the wisdom and utility of having the earth peopled, with the folly and vanity of having it unoccupied.

If then our comparatively little globe would have been "created in vain," "had it not been inhabited:" (so teaches "Jehovah who created the heavens:") how can we reason at all? how discern the symmetry of divine operations? and, shocking thought! how clear our Maker from stupendous folly? if we believe his more splendid and infinitely numerous worlds "were created in vain;" i. e. not "to be inhabited?" Is not this bible evidence?

Now contemplate the holy inhabitants of the planet Saturn. They see the noble acts of God. They survey their own world, a globe 900 times larger than our earth. They behold the Sun, and their seven moons: and their world surrounded by a luminous ring, 600,000 miles in circumference; adorning their sky all around; displaying their Maker with admirable effect. With the best hopes, we judge them sinless; happy in their paradisaical habitation; delighted with themselves, with one another, with God, with all they see and know: and with a certain prospect of endless life.

Now what within them, or around them, would intimate the triple nature of their Lord? or, shew them a Son in the interior of his "essence," equal to himself; "begotten, and not created?" or, what would lead them to detach his Spirit from himself as a third person; they knowing that he is himself a Spirit? i. e. detach one Spirit from another Spirit, as first and third persons? We could

not think the better of them, should we learn that they were speculating on the "substance" of their invisible Maker; or, maintaining that his "essence" was the same in two, three, or six unintelligible "persons." Were this announced to us; could we resist the conviction that they were drawing off their allegiance from the Lord God Almighty; and verging to that idolatry which has dishonored ourselves?

The noble inhabitants of that world know that "God is a Spirit;" and that "God is love:" that God is therefore The Holy Ghost. They know that this Spirit is the Father of creation; and we, his offspring: that he is in the midst of all changes; and by his active influence, effects those changes; ruling worlds of matter and of mind. They know as well as we, that his mighty power rolls the planets, and brightens the stars; and sways intelligences, and rules their actions; through his boundless realms. Their language may differ from ours; and may be more free from ambiguities. But they know that which we mean, when we say, The Spirit of God garnishes the surface of their globe; spreads radiance over their heavens; and works in them to will, and to do, and to enjoy.

Their pure hearts open their mouths; and their glad voices spontaneously declare, what we needed an inspired prophet to declare in our dull hearing: "Thou, even Thou art LORD alone. Thou hast made heaven, the heaven of heavens, with all their host, the earth and all things that are therein; and Thou preservest them all: and the host of heaven worshippeth thee."—Neh. ix. 6. The inhabitants of Saturn are one of the heavenly hosts.

While it is inconceivable that they should distribute the Godhead into several persons; they must contemplate the HOLY ONE in the different relations he sustains to them.



They and we contemplate him clothed with different attributes ; performing his diversified operations.

Not unfrequently in our calm thoughts, we contemplate God as at rest : at other times, as equably moving on in his and our affairs : and at other times, as coming forth rapidly ; sending abroad vengeance or mercy : rolling up the heavens in blackness, and driving down the floods : or, clearing off the tempest, and decking the fields with clear shining after the storm.

But to search for interior distinctions in his being : or several “ percipient ” persons in his substance ; equal, and economically inferior and superior to one another : giving and accepting offices ; sending and being sent : Creation teacheth not. God’s word teacheth not. His Spirit teacheth not. His Son teacheth not. Honestly I can not. As accountable, I dare not—so teach.

## REASON V.

*There is an apparent absurdity in the propositions, "God is three one :—" "There are three persons in God, and they are equal in power and glory ; and in essence one."*

THESE propositions wear on their face, the intention of literal construction : the guise of plain truth. Indeed we must understand real persons ; as otherwise they could not be equal in power and glorious perfections. To say, Peter is equal to Peter ; and that each of them is possessed of all the attributes of man ; or, that God is equal to God ; would be frivolous.

That real persons are meant, we have, I think, the testimony of Dr. DWIGHT. In maintaining the personality of the last of the sacred three, or The Spirit ; he calls him "a percipient being"—p. 4 : and a "person addressed in prayer as a distinct person from two others who are mentioned by the names of God and Christ :—" and a person to whom "an office is assigned"—p. 11. And "whether the Spirit send or be sent, he is equally determined to be a living agent"—p. 17 : obviously meaning "a living agent" in distinction from that other "living agent" who sent or was sent by him : "since," says he, "in the physical sense, it is impossible that any other being should either send or be sent."

If there are three such "percipient beings," "living agents," or "persons ;" and they are known to be equal ; the adjective equal can be properly applied to them.—They are real persons. And they are so understood by common people : and they are so set forth by the fashion-

able theology. I suppose at the same time, the majority of those clergymen who have *studied the subject*, would declare against such persons; if they were obliged to speak out plainly what they believe. What they would substitute may be more doubtful; as there is much discordance in their statements. They have latterly chosen to say, they know not what they are; leaving them as dark mysteries; and leaving the common people to imagine real persons. I know how difficult it is with pious, and upright trinitarians, when reasoning on the subject, to keep themselves in position. I have known trinitarians of another character, when pressed with their absurdities, change their position; and complain that they were misrepresented; and use such language as “renders meaning obscure; and not only obscure, but unintelligible; and not only unintelligible, but utterly lost in the strangeness of their phraseology:” and finally assume important airs, and discharge an anathema. The inconceivable *importance* of the mystery, is made to quadrate with its total *unintelligibility*. This seems absurd.

I will not misrepresent any one willingly. I appeal to the words of Dr. Dwight: to Flavel’s account of the Covenant of Redemption; and to the standard writers in general: to defend me from the charge of misrepresenting trinitarians; when I say their language denotes three persons, actual persons. If such is the obvious meaning of their creeds; they have no right to travel out of the record, to escape from a just charge of absurdity: nor to complain that they are misrepresented: nor ought they to practice mental reservation. Men of piety wish to be sincere: and when they perceive the line of truth escapes their ken, they are modest and candid. As to those trinitarians who claim the right to anathematize such as assent not to their



creeds, they are sacredly bound to see that their Articles are intelligible ; expressed in no ambiguous terms. (Appendix G.)

The three equal persons in the Godhead are not understood as analogical by the *common people* : for they suppose they are all persons in the same sense. Nor, by a *majority of preachers* : for they would then (unless dishonest) inform their hearers that the first is a literal person ; and that the second and third have only figurative personality. Nor, by those who say they *do not know* what they mean by three persons : for then they would know. Nor, by those who say they are persons in a *mysterious sense* : for then the mystery would disappear ; and they could explain themselves.—Then also they might keep within the sphere of ideas : and anathemas would have nothing to do with the argument.

Trinitarians usually speak of three, as all infinite eternal equal persons : as three percipient agents, performing different acts : as counselling together ; making stipulations which bear date from eternity : as assuming different offices, and performing different parts in man's redemption : with nothing indicative of figurative meaning ; nor admitting such meaning. The created man Christ Jesus is not the Son called the second person ; for he was begotten in the womb of Mary ; knew not the day of Judgment ; increased in wisdom ; was a man of sorrows ; and died on the cross. Whereas, the second person in the trinity was (by the supposition) the Eternal Son, uncreated but begotten in the substance of the Father. He was equal in strength and glory to the Father who begat him, and to God the Holy Ghost : and he could of himself do all things, and suffer nothing.

Nor, on the hypothesis of three real persons, is the third person designated by calling him, "God employed in his

most benevolent and wonderful work ; that of restoring holiness to the soul of man ; in his most glorious character, that of the Sanctifier." Who will say, this is descriptive of a third person equal to the eternal Father and the eternal Son ? For he *is* the Eternal Father, for aught appearing to the contrary. Agreeably to Jude, 1st verse, "Sanctified by God The Father." God the Father is the Person, the God, the Spirit, the Holy Ghost, intended by the apostle, when he said, "Sanctified by God The Father."

Whereas, the Holy Ghost the Third Person of the creeds, has accepted an office from the First Person ; and is sent, shed down, or poured forth by the Second Person, to perform the work of sanctifying the soul, as "office work : " or he "proceeds from the Father and the Son." I do not believe the apostle Jude or any other apostle ever heard of the Three Persons now under contemplation ; and which, I think, present the appearance of an absurdity.

To say there is no *apparent* absurdity in the doctrine commonly set forth, would not be true. For men of the highest standing in the literary world, such as Newton, Locke, Milton, and a host of others, formerly and at present, have thought it absurd. Many ecclesiastics, and many mathematicians, philosophers, and politicians, have thought the propositions, real absurdities : men, too, of the purest morals : men who, on other subjects, have been and still are, successful discoverers of acknowledged truth.

To elude the influence of such men, those interested may revile them as errorists. This however would be no proof that they are not right ; nor that they are not sincerely desirous to know what things are true in the mo-

mentous subject of religion. Nor is it true that the greatest of men, not ecclesiastics, have inclined to the Divine Unity, because they have remained ignorant of what is going on among theologians. They have been well versed in ecclesiastical as well as civil and political history.—They have been conversant with all schemes of doctrine ; and with the bible. Moreover they are less interested, this world only considered, than those who denounce them. And they could, if they pleased, denounce their denouncers. And this would settle nothing: What they or their denouncers are, the great day will disclose. There are now “those who are first, who will be last;” when “the Judgment is set, and the books are opened.”

Some writers have said that God is three in one sense, and one in another. This is not an apparent absurdity.—It would, however, seem fair to tell in what sense they consider him three. If this cannot be done, it looks like an artful expedient ; as no valuable information is imparted. We all know, or can know, in what sense God is one person, viz : in a literal sense. We read in the bible of “his person” in the singular number, Heb. i. 3. ; but not of his persons in the plural.

To reveal is to make known. To say the three persons are revealed, and not made known would be palpable absurdity.

What is a person? I mean an individual intelligent being. I suppose this is the general understanding. I say *intelligent* ; because we do not call a stone or a tree, a person. *Individual* ; because the being called person, must be one. If we use the word person otherwise, we can tell what we mean by it. We can tell what we mean by any word, as well in theology as in mathematics. (Appendix H.)



The Father, Son, and Holy Ghost are said to be three equal persons in God. The proof is an apparent absurdity. It is this. The Father, Son, and Holy Ghost are each of them God Supreme. For the same attributes and works are ascribed to each of them. They are therefore three: three equal persons. The legitimate inference is, they are therefore one: one person. The latter conclusion follows from the premises. Most clearly they are the same God. And why not the same person? This, too, most clearly follows from the premises. If they designate the same God, they designate the same one intelligent being; the same person. Identity of actions and attributes cannot be predicated of persons numerically different. This would be absurd.

God is one intelligent being: literally one person. If this be true; to say three persons are one God, is to say three persons are one being, one person: i. e. three persons are one person. For God is one being; one person. If any man say, this is not absurd; let him remove the apparent absurdity. Let him put the words in appropriate order, and make the ideas, in the understanding, meet in harmonious truth. Ambiguous language denotes ambiguity of conception. Riddles and paradoxes are not necessary in sound science. In religion they are unseemly.

But it is said, there are three persons in God in a sense beyond our comprehension; which we can neither conceive nor explain. I ask then, what do we believe about them? Plainly nothing. For the fact as well as the mode is, by the position, beyond our reach; kept hid in God. Now, I think it absurd to say, we believe it. But if it be only an apparent absurdity; let him who thinks so, shew that we can believe without ideas: without knowing what that is which we believe.

If it be said, we approximate the idea of trinity of persons; we approach towards it: why give it a name before we reach it? Possibly the idea is more remote than we are aware of: or, it may be so different from our expectations, that when we reach it, we may think some other name more appropriate.

Still we are told, creation is ascribed to Father, Word, and Spirit. The same divine attributes are ascribed to each. Be it so. We infer that Father, Word, and Spirit are not three persons, but one and the same person.—We use words as literally and intelligibly as we can. The inference is clear.

One person may perform an action similar to the action of another person; but not numerically the same action.

Moreover, one person may possess attributes very similar to the attributes of another person. But he cannot possess identically the same attributes. Where persons have attributes very similar; God has taken wonderful care to enable us to discover that they are not the same. Numerous and similar as men are, we rarely mistake one for another.

Now this argument proves that the terms The Father, The Word, and The Holy Ghost, intend One God, One Being, One Person: not Three Gods, Three Beings, Three Persons. Is it possible that the conclusion does not follow from the premises?

Here are the premises. The Father, The Word, and The Holy Ghost are each of them God Supreme: all the three have the same attributes. Our inference is, The Father, Word, and Ghost, are One God, One Being, One Person: and limited to that One God, One Being, One Person: and exclude all idea of Three Gods, Three Beings, Three Persons.

Again, the being or person who created the world, is the one God. But creation is the work of Father, Word, and Holy Ghost. Therefore Father, Word, and Holy Ghost are that one person, the one God.

Further, this divine being or person has peculiar attributes. But these identical attributes are ascribed to Father, Word, and Ghost. Hence most conclusively, Father, Word, and Holy Ghost cannot be different beings or persons; but the same being, the same person.

This argument respecting persons, is the same as respecting God or being. It is grounded on the same principle, viz.: the being and attributes of one person are not the being and attributes of another. The unity of being of Father, Son, and Spirit, is equally the unity of person of Father, Son, and Spirit: and excludes three or thirty from person, just as much as from being or from God. And if the argument is not conclusive, and there may after all be three or thirty persons; so there may be three or thirty beings or Gods.

Trinitarians use this very argument to prove that Father, Son, and Spirit are One God. And it just as conclusively proves One Person. The argument bears with the same force on the unity of God, the unity of being, and the unity of person. Every attempt to evade this force, will lead to absurdity; or to that equivocation which I have aimed to avoid.

Trinitarians acknowledge that distinction of being implies distinction of person. But they do not admit that distinction of person implies distinction of being. Why not? Because they would then have three Gods. What then? Let us not take a crooked path to avoid the consequences. If there are three Gods, let us honestly acknowledge them all. Clearly if one person is



one intelligent being, three persons are three intelligent beings.

Shall we say, this is so with men : but not with God who is so uncomprehensibly greater than we ? and whose mode of existence is so different from ours ?

This is only an attempt to expunge from our minds, all idea of person and personal identity. It is only saying our doctrine is *vox et nihil preterea* : a sound and nothing else. The doctrine is rendered “ obscure ; and not only obscure, but unintelligible ; and not only unintelligible, but utterly lost.”

Here a sincere christian who from infancy has had true *religion and the trinity* coupled together in his thoughts ; may interpose and say, *You are reasoning. What has reason to do with the subject ? Reason does not teach the blessed Trinity ; nor furnish a clue to unriddle the perplexity of the labyrinth in which you are wandering ; and where every step is dark ; and where to expatiate is to be lost. But does not the bible furnish a clue ?*

No, my friend, No. The bible is a perfect stranger not only to these perplexities, but to this whole labyrinth. It says not one word on the subject. The labyrinth itself is the work of men. And men are lost in their own devices.

A scheme of doctrine shrouded in such dark mystery, is venerable by its antiquity ; and by the space to which it is extended. It is not however, solicitous for scrutiny. And by contemplative minds, its establishment and triumph will be traced back to the policy and triumph of the selfish principle in man : not to the disinterested revelation of God. Transubstantiation, purgatory, and other mysteries, are equally venerable by antiquity, and extent. Ecclesiastics have defended each, during centuries of darkness and fraud ; by censures and proscription ; more than

by argument. Force and fraud were long dominant in coercing men's minds to uniformity of religious opinion, religious worship, and religious taxation. Upright men would choose to have recourse to neither. The policy has been dishonest and cruel, which in the name of Christ and of the church, has denounced the heretic ; decried his virtues ; and crushed the man, merely because it could not cope with his argument ; and was determined on his tribute, or the aid of his influence. This is the dernier resort, when destitute of fairer means.

When the Roman emperors took the christian teachers under their protection, and enforced the decrees of their councils by the sword ; those councils could have made the unlettered multitude believe any thing. Suppose they had decreed that the apostle Peter is "three one : " that he is mystically "three persons in one essence," and these three persons are equal, and are one ; they are Peter : and that each of the popes, with his triple crown, is triune. This would have been orthodox ; and would have been believed : i. e. believed in the sense in which men are said to believe in that which is "obscure ; and not only obscure, but unintelligible ; and not only unintelligible, but utterly lost in the strangeness of the phraseology."

It would also have been a speculative absurdity. But the worst absurdity would have been seen in the practical result. For the more mysterious "the unknown darkness" of this sublime article is ; the more devoutly it would have been revered by the credulous millions ; and the more fearful the fires which would have consumed the few who should presumptuously have disbelieved.

Has there been nothing monstrous in the practice, during ages of darkness, in fulminating censures, fires, and damnation against those who have doubted of such unin-

telligible jargon ? while whoredom, theft, and lies, have been treated as comparatively venial ? and by thousands who have believed in pious frauds ? and tens of thousands who have practised fraud ?

And I appeal to men of understanding in these better times ; and ask : is it not really or apparently an absurd thing, to lead men and women solemnly to profess that they believe the mystery of three equal persons in God's essence, or mode of existence ; of which persons, the preacher is conscious at the time, that neither he nor they have the least conception ? And at the same time, to treat as outcasts the men whose rectitude cannot ascribe a pompous and mystical nothing to the " God who ought to be feared ?"

Among ministers who practise this absurd thing, are men who are good and true, as well as bad and dishonest. I can ascribe rectitude to such a preacher with the same facility with which I ascribe rectitude to the master of slaves. Both the one and the other, formed by education to such things from early childhood, follow venerated ancestors ; and follow things wrong ; the wrong being associated with much that is right.

To illustrate my meaning, I state a common church article. " You believe that the mode of the divine existence is such as lays a foundation for a distinction into Three Persons ; The Father, The Son, and The Holy Ghost : and that these Three are One in essence ; and equal in power and glory."

I look attentively for the meaning. It occurs, that it is thought of great importance in the matter of salvation : or why is it found in a solemn creed ? It might be presumed that it is very intelligible : or why is it propounded to unlearned and very feeble minded persons, girls, young



men and children; as well as to intelligent and learned men? It might be reasonably presumed that it is adapted to their several capacities, as other first principles of religion are. I, however, perceive at once, that I know nothing what it means. I have hardly modesty enough to think it is because my mental perception is so inferior to the discernment of those feeble minded persons, girls, young men, and children, who solemnly bow assent to it. I somewhat suspect that if the preachers themselves understand what they mean, I too can get at the meaning. I ponder again. I think of a "foundation for a distinction." "The mode of the divine existence lays this foundation." There are "Three Persons." They are real; for they are "equal." I suppose they are three exceedingly high and uncreated persons. For all of them have "power and glory in equal," and I suppose in infinite degrees.

What the physical "essence" of one or three Divinities may be, is not obvious. Whatever the "essence" is, it is not a "mode." Neither, agreeably to this Article, does the essence lay the "foundation for the distinction into persons." For it is "the mode of the divine existence which lays the foundation." As the bible has nothing on these subjects, I again ponder—and ponder. The "three persons" resting on the "mode" as a "foundation," are after all not "three," but one in the "essence." I heartily wish I could learn. But to me, the theorem is "obscure; and not only obscure, but unintelligible; and no only unintelligible, but utterly lost in the strangeness of the phraseology." Make the best I can of all such Articles; and still I think their whole purport merges in obscurity and "the Unknown Darkness."

Did I believe that the Articles have meaning in the minds of preachers who read them to those whom they

receive into the church : it would mortify me much to find that the whole meaning, as it exists in my dull understanding, is absolutely nothing. It would also seem passing strange, that many men who are my superiors, are as totally ignorant of the whole meaning as I am. This ignorance, when acknowledged, makes a heretic : disqualifies for church fellowship ! Tell it not in Gath !

Still it may be true, speaking figuratively, that God or man is trinity. Napoleon was one person, literally. Two of his powers might be personified. He might say, "I counselled with my Logos, my wisdom or understanding : and have found its decisions correct. With a loud voice it has remonstrated with me against blind passions. It urges my interests, and seeks my glory. It sees the future, and has arranged the details of the campaign." Or with some variation of meaning, he might say, "I sent forth my Logos, my powerful command, most opportunely. It ran very swiftly, and moved the columns in an instant." Or, with a little further variation ; "I made my Aid-de-camp my Logos, whom I sent to impart my orders, and fulfil the decisions of my wisdom." Again he might say, "My Spirit is the most powerful agent in Europe. I will breathe it into my marshals, and send it into my hosts. It shall achieve the victory and astonish the world."

Here are three persons ; Napoleon, and his wisdom, and effective influence : one literal ; and two figurative persons. Yet no mystery : still less such a mystery as needs to excite hatred and anathemas. Why not ? Because it is understood : because we have ideas as well as words. Or must we say, because it does not interfere with a great scheme of profitable operations ?

I mean not that this is analogous to an hundred sacred passages, all having meanings circumstantially or materi-

ally different: nor that all might not have been as well said, and as well understood, without the words "persons," and "three," and "trinity;" as with them. The bible did not need these words; nor use them. And it is impossible we should need them; if our object is simply to know and do the divine will.

H



## REASON VI.

*Minds early imbued with the doctrine that The Father, The Son, and The Holy Ghost are three infinite equal persons in God ; rarely obtain any intelligible meaning of the words Father, Son, and Ghost or Spirit ; as they read these words in the bible. The words have a settled, though illusory meaning in the creeds. The creeds are constantly read in their audience. And they always understand that the words mean equal persons.*

THUS "The Son of God" always means the second person in the trinity. For instance : "That holy thing which shall be born of thee, shall be called 'The Son of God.'" "That thing" was the second eternal person. And "though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered."—Heb. v. 8. This "Son" who "learned ;" "learned obedience ;" "learned obedience by sufferings ;" was the second person in the trinity consubstantial with the Father. So the creeds have fixed and settled the matter, in the minds of the multitude. And such is not the meaning of Son in any one passage in the bible.

And so Holy Ghost always means the third person. Yet Πνεῦμα, the Greek word rendered Ghost, means spirit, wind, breath, soul of man, the soul of the man Christ Jesus, apparition, ardor, courage, affection, temper of mind, desire, vigor or cheerfulness, energy, influence, inspiration, miraculous power of prophesying, miraculous gifts, sanctity of mind and of desire, divine power, effects of divine power exerted, and the invisible God.

With what profit can that man read the bible and the several passages where Spirit has these several meanings ; while he supposes that in them all, where allusion is made to God, it means what his creed taught him from his infancy, viz : The Third Person in the Trinity ? a sense in which the word Spirit or Ghost is never once used in the bible !

“ While the Spirit of God is in my nostrils, my lips shall not speak wickedness.”—Job, xxvii. 3. How does the plain man understand Job ? He supposes “ the Spirit of God ” the third person in the blessed trinity, was mysteriously in the nostrils as well as lips and heart of that eminent man. Whereas, had he been unincumbered with these mysteries, he would have known that Spirit of God, in this passage, means *air* ; or *breath*, which Job, through the agency of God, breathed through his nostrils.

A similar mistake, from the same cause, was made by the translators in I. Peter, iii. 18. The apostle is exhorting christians to be patient while suffering for well doing : and enforces the exhortation from the example of Jesus ; who in his last agonies had said, “ Father into thine hand I commend my spirit ” or soul. The Father heard and preserved his soul alive. Says Peter, (duly rendered,) “ Christ also hath once suffered for sins, that he might bring us to God : being put to death as to his flesh (body,) but kept alive as to his spirit (soul) : by which he went and preached to the spirits in prison.” His soul survived the stroke of death, and went unto hades ; while the crucified body rested in the tomb. Vid. Bishop Horsey’s Sermon on the passage.

Our translators say, “ Being put to death *in* the flesh, and quickened *by* the Spirit.” They had no authority for the prepositions *in*, and *by*. They mistook the meaning of ζωοποιήσεις as here used, which they rendered “ quicken-

ed :” quickened *by* the Spirit. They thought it meant that the Spirit the third person brought Christ to life. But it really meant that Christ did not die at all as to his spirit : but was made to live, or survive the death of the body. Their mistaking his created soul for the Third blessed person, led them to use the capital letter S in Spirit. And Dr. Dwight adduces this passage to prove “the Deity and Personality” of the third infinite agent in God.—Sermons, Vol. 3. p. 12. We can with equal propriety, prove his Deity and Personality, from “The Spirit of God,” or *atmospheric air*, in Job’s nostrils. We need resort to no such means to prove that Holy Ghost, or Spirit, in divers passages of scripture, designates God himself our glorious Sanctifier.

When we read in Judges, xiii. and xiv., “The Spirit of the Lord began to move Samson at times in the camp of Dan :” and “the Spirit of the Lord came mightily upon him, and he rent the lion as he would have rent a kid :” and “the Spirit of the Lord came mightily upon him, and he went down to Ashkelon, and slew thirty men, and took their spoil :” who, not embarrassed with the trinity, would have suspected that “the Spirit of the Lord” meant the third person in God ? Or that Spirit and Lord meant two of these persons ? or that God was a triple being ? or three one ? A mind not previously occupied with a magical enigma ; would readily have understood that God by his unseen influence, excited an impetuous courage in Samson ; and nerved his arm to these exploits. But such a reader would no more have suspected that God was several persons, than that Samson was a numerous army.

Language is such that one word has various meanings. And yet, several words are sometimes used with one and the same meaning. As when we read,



“God sent forth his word and healed the people.”—Ps. cvii.

“He sendeth forth his word and melteth the ice.”—Ps. xlvii.

“Thou sendest forth thy Spirit and they are created.”—Ps. civ.

“The Spirit of God hath made me, and the breath of the Almighty giveth me life.”—Job, xxxiii.

In these passages, “his Word,” and “his Spirit,” and “his Breath,” all mean one and the same thing, viz: the effective power or influence which God put forth.

“If I cast out demons by the Spirit of God.”—Mat. xii. 28.

“But if I by the Finger of God cast out demons.”—Mat. xi. 20.

“The Power of God was present to heal.”—Luke, v. 17.

If “Spirit of God” is here the third person in the trinity, “Finger of God” is the selfsame blessed person: and so is “The Power of God.” For obviously, Spirit, and Finger, and Power in these three passages intend the same thing.

Of the Author of the sinner’s regeneration, we read in the following passages:

“So is every one that is born of the Spirit.”—John, iii. 8.

“Whosoever is born of God.”—I. John, v. 4.

“Sanctified by God The Father.”—Jude, i.

Here Spirit, and God, and Father, are one and the selfsame Sanctifier. If Spirit is the third person, so is The Father, and so is God. If The Father is the first person, so is God, and so is Spirit. And if God is the second person, so is Spirit, and so is Father. Who will deny that in these three passages, Spirit, and God, and Father, are one and the selfsame person? and not three persons?

The Spirit of God inspired the prophets ; renews the soul ; imparts light and comfort and hope ; and will secure the salvation of all the elect : all which is attributed to God even The Father. Soul of God signifieth God who is a Spirit : and Soul of man, the man himself as an intelligent being. “Your new moons, my soul hateth.”—Isa. i. 14. “My elect in whom my Soul delighteth.”—Ps. xvii. 1. Is Soul a third person in the Godhead ? It is not pretended. Yet it is identical with Spirit. The Soul of man, and the Spirit of a man, is not a third person in the man. And Soul of God, and Spirit of God, are used in the language of men ; and in analogy with what is said by man, of man.

So needful is it to ascertain and fix the meaning of words, from the passages where they occur, in connection with what lies around them ; and from parallel passages : and not from some traditionary notions which we bring to the text. A mind pre-occupied with the sacred three, will find them almost every where ; and understand the bible almost no where. I say therefore, with Professor Stewart, “I could heartily wish the word persons had never been introduced into the creeds of the church.”

It may not be easy, precisely to determine in every passage, whether the Spirit of God or Holy Ghost means God himself as an agent ; or his power put forth ; or the effect of that power, or his sanctifying, inspiring or miraculous influence. Yet there can be no material mistake. The language, in which it pleases God to address men, is the language of men. And could the bible be now translated, with the biblical learning now in the world ; the language would generally be as intelligible as the works of our best authors. And now, if unincumbered with mystical technicalities ; we have no more difficulty in understanding

what the inspired writers say of The Spirit of God, than in understanding the expressions of Nebuchadnezzar and his son Belshazzar. They say of Daniel, "The Spirit of the Holy Gods is in him."—Dan. iv. and v. Pharaoh uses the same language. "Can we find such a man as Joseph, in whom is the Spirit of the Gods?"—Gen. xli. They supposed the Gods, with their inspiring *influence*, were in Joseph and Daniel.

The scriptures speak of God, acting by his word, his spirit, his hand or arm, his finger, his breath, his soul, his power, his voice, his eye, his mouth or his feet. And this is altogether analogous to man acting by his natural powers of body and of mind.

And if God, as pure Divinity apart from the man Christ Jesus, is figuratively and analogically three; the analogy is his resemblance herein to man with his powers of knowing, and efficiently willing, personified. And the doctrine of three infinite and equal persons in God, is a species of polytheism unwarranted by the scriptures. Such persons being creations of human imagination, ought clearly to have other names. For people accustomed from childhood to hear them named The Father, and The Son, and The Holy Ghost, rarely learn, to their dying day, the meaning of these appellations as used in the bible.



## REASON VII.

*The bewildering influence of the cabalistical expressions employed in setting forth the Trinity : the confusion of ideas : the inconvenient ignorance which they settle on the minds of hearers : these are objections to their use.*

PUBLIC teachers who have clear ideas, paint them clearly on the minds of their hearers. Those whose definitions are indistinct ; and whose expressions do not convey clear meaning ; evince the obscurity of their own conceptions. They issue out words ; and not ideas. Hence the bewildered views of their people on the subjects of the Divinity and Humanity and personal character of Christ. Hearers modestly impute their failure in obtaining clear and well adjusted knowledge to their own incapacity and inattention. They are mistaken.

I have occasionally questioned such hearers ; and received answers like the following :

What do you think of Christ ?

*Ans.* He is the Eternal God.

Had he a created soul or spirit ?

*Ans.* I should not dare to say so. He is the everlasting Son of God ; the second person in the sacred trinity ; and equal with the Father.

I asked the lady of a respectable judge, (both professors,)

Do you think that Jesus Christ had any soul ?

*Ans.* No.

Do *you* think he had, Judge ?

*Ans.* No, I do not.

Do you think he had a *body*?

*Ans.* I rather think he had: though this has been doubted by some.

Others have been asked, Whose Son is the Eternal God Jesus Christ?

*Ans.* The Father's only begotten Son.

Is The Father a different God?

*Ans.* No.

Are we then to understand that God is his own Father? that he has a Son who is himself? Is the Son's Father, the Son himself? and the Father's Son, the Father himself?

*Ans.* It is a mystery. There are three persons in the Godhead.

Who is the Holy Ghost?

*Ans.* The Third Person in the adorable Trinity.

Has he any Father?

*Ans.* No, he is sent. He is equal to the other persons.

Has he any Son?

*Ans.* No.

Is there any other God besides him?

*Ans.* No.

The Holy Ghost being the only One God, has no Father and no Son. How do you reconcile this with God's having a Son? and being himself that Son?

*Ans.* By the mysterious trinity of Persons.

The apostle speaks of a God, whom he calls "the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ." In what sense is he "the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ?"

*Ans.* Christ the Son, though equal with the Father, was begotten of the Father in his own essence. The manner is a mystery. The Father who begat, did not create The Son. The Son is equally God and uncreated as The Father.

And in what sense is The Father, "the God of our Lord Jesus Christ?"

*Ans.* The Eternal Son voluntarily agreed to act a part in man's redemption subordinate to the Father; and to obey him: and accepted the office of Mediator under the Father. And he acknowledges the Father as his God, while in this subordinate character. And he will continue in this economically inferior station, till he shall have made his foes his foot-stool.

And what relation will his rank then bear to that of his Father and his God?

*Ans.* I suppose, as he was from all eternity equal to his Father in power and glory; he will not think it robbery to re-assume his equality and primeval rank.

How is all this reconciled with I. Cor. xv. 24? Paul acquaints us that instead of the Son's rising to his primeval equality at the time of delivering up the kingdom, he will descend to a subordination. "Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God even the Father: when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. For he must reign till he hath put all enemies under his feet. For he (the Father) hath put all things under his (the Son's) feet. But when he saith, All things are put under him (the Son) it is manifest that HE is excepted which did put all things under him. And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the SON also himself be subject unto him that did put all things under him: that GOD may be all in all." Does Paul here teach that the Son is the second person in the Godhead, equal in his original power and glory with his Father? And does Paul say, he will rise to his original equality? Does he not exactly reverse this theory? and say; "Then shall the Son also himself be subject to him



that put all things under him, that God may be all in all?"

*Ans.* It is a mystery. This passage from Paul is probably not yet understood.

Nothing is here said of the third person in the adorable trinity. Will he also rise from his inferior and official station which he has received from the Father? or as some say, from the Father and the Son conjointly? Will he, too, leave his office work, his mission, or procession? and reassume his equality with the Father and the Son, from whom he proceeds?

*Ans.* The standard writers on the subject of the most Holy Trinity have not pretended to make explanations: and for the best of reasons. The subject is a mystery. What we have to do, is to believe; not to search out the Almighty unto perfection. It is enough for us to know that God is three in one, and one in three.

When it is said of the Son, "God, even thy God hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows;" who are the Son's "fellows?"

*Ans.* The other persons in the trinity. They are all equals.

Are they distinct Gods?

*Ans.* No.

Are they distinct persons?

*Ans.* Yes. But in their essence they are one.

Are we then to understand that Christ's fellows are identical with himself in essence, and that he is anointed with more gladness than they?

*Ans.* It is a mystery. But the Father said of the Son, "Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, against the man that is my fellow, saith the Lord of hosts: smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered."—Zech. xiii. This

“shepherd,” this “man,” this “fellow,” is Jesus Christ the Eternal God against whom God the Father called the sword of justice to awake.

Who in Rev. i. 18, said, “I am he that liveth, and was dead?”

*Ans.* It was Jesus Christ the Eternal God. The great Jehovah died.

Who governed the world while he was dead? and who brought him to life again?

*Ans.* There are three. The Father always governs the world. Christ the Eternal Son was “quickened,” i. e. brought to life, “by the Spirit” the third person. Hence the “Deity and Personality of the Spirit.”

Why then does Paul exactly say, “God *the Father* raised him from the dead?”—Gal. i. 1.

*Ans.* It is a mystery.

On the whole do you not think that the Son was a created soul and body?

*Ans.* I have not understood that the Son was a created being. He is equal with the Father: and was begotten by the Father the first person from all eternity in his own essence; and begotten by the Holy Ghost the third person in the womb of the virgin: and so he became man, and was dead and buried.

And was this the soul which he commended to the Father on the Cross? and the Ghost which he yielded up, when he bowed his head and died?

*Ans.* Undoubtedly.

And did God the Son say, “My soul is exceeding sorrowful even unto death?” and “Thou wilt not leave my soul in hades?”—Acts, ii.

*Ans.* I suppose so, in some sense. It is a mystery.

And was this Eternal God the Son, this uncreated but begotten God; was he the speaker who said, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, The Son can do nothing of himself?"—John, v. 19. And, "Of that day, knoweth not the Son, but the Father?"—John xiii. 32.

*Ans.* I suppose he spake after the manner of men in his inferior station in the economy of redemption. In his mediatorial character, he could make these declarations: though in himself, he knew and could do all things.

This is truly after the manner of men. Thus the catholic priest as a man is profoundly ignorant of the crimes of those who confess to him. But as confessor, he knows them well, and grants absolution. But do you find no difficulty in conceiving this Eternal Son, this second person in the trinity, brought down from the bosom of the Father, and diminished to the dimensions of the soul which animated the "holy child" conceived in the virgin?

*Ans.* This is the mysterious incarnation. Great is the mystery of godliness.

Hearing such and similar answers, we sometimes say to ourselves, Is the doctrine of three equal persons, a doctrine of revelation? pure revelation? certainly and clearly revealed? and so clear and important that we cannot be saved without it? And is it still so mysterious? so kept hid in God that we can know nothing what it is? where the light is darkness? and where the revelation of it is an oracle uttering all the ambiguities of the Sibyl at Cumæ, or Apollo at Delphi? And when Watts and others, with the bible as their guide, set forth "The glory of Christ as God-Man;" and attribute to his inferior nature, whatever is beneath pure Divinity; and to his Godhead, whatever is Divine: must clouds of dust cover them? and cries of her-



esy assail them ? Of this the meek spirit of Watts complained : and his works are still regarded with suspicion, and misrepresented by men who have studied the subject less hours, than prayerful Watts studied it years.

Watts in his *Logic*, long used in colleges as a classic, laid down this, among rules which learners should observe in searching for truth, viz : “Never content yourselves with words without ideas.”

When he attempted to speak and write on the scholastic trinity in which he was educated ; he found that he could not follow the rule he had laid down for his juniors. Resorting to the bible ; he found no such trinity there. Acquainting himself with the different schemes of trinity invented by men in dark ages ; and studying the scriptures with a view to the subject more than thirty years ; he found the mystery and jargon of the creeds were useless. He learned that an analogical trinity is defensible and intelligible : that Christ both as God and man, has glories too generally overlooked : that we have not yet apprehended all those things which may be learned from the bible concerning our Lord Jesus Christ : that “the maturer age of the world has given light to many passages which were not well understood in the days of the fathers :” that “consulting the bible with diligence, and looking only at the sense as it lies before us ; neither considering nor caring whether it be new or old doctrine, so it be true ; is more likely to lead us to advance the growing honors of our Savior ; than to interpret sacred texts in correspondence with schemes learned from men.”

He also modestly presumes that “succeeding writers will yet further unfold the glories of our blessed Lord ; and correct any mistakes he may have made, while pur-

suing his tract through the third heavens the present residence of the glorified Jesus ; and in tracing the footsteps of the Son of God, through long past ages of his pre-existent state ; which commenced before these lower heavens were formed ; or time was measured by the sun and moon.”—Watts’ “Glory of Christ.”

Paul says, “The invisible things (attributes) of God, by the things which are made, are *clearly seen*.” If, to serve a turn, we say, they are not *clearly seen*, we contradict the bible. And truly common people have *clear ideas* of God’s power, omnipresence, and eternity. They know what they mean by these words ; and can so express themselves that others know what they mean.

When we pretend that trinity of persons, like all God’s perfections, is mysterious and incomprehensible ; we either deceive ourselves ; or we mean to deceive others.—We blend things which are unlike. We know what the attributes of God are ; far as our minds can reach. But what the orthodox trinity is, we know nothing. We see God’s perfections *clearly*. They fill the measure of our comprehension, and appear grand and sublime. We study and enlarge our minds to twice their former capacity : and we contemplate the same divine perfections : and our perception of them is twice as august as before. But double or quadruple our knowledge of the mystery of the trinity, and our thoughts do not reach the subject at all. We see it neither *clearly* nor dimly. When we ask a pious trinitarian of his creed, he admits that he is environed with difficulties ; and that he hopes for more light. The Lord will grant him a good deliverance. When we ask an anathematizing trinitarian to say, what he demands that we should believe ? He presents the subject before us, *ex cathedra*, with superior airs. When he has done ; we

find he has told us what we as well knew when we were eight years old, as he knows now. He has not yet started from the mathematical point.

The common people are not much encouraged to scrutinize these mysteries. They are rather cautioned to beware; and be content with their inability to comprehend such high matters. They are told that God is One; and that God is Three: that he is triune: that three infinite persons are equal: and that they are not three, but only one in essence. They ruminate upon what they think profoundly conceived by their teachers; upon the profundity of the mystery of one God in three intelligent persons, arranging themselves as first, second, and third in office and rank. They bow assent to the words. Their belief and zeal are settled: their knowledge nothing. Let those who doubt this, question them, and I think they will be satisfied.

I have asked plain men, Who are the three persons in the Godhead?

With surprise at a question so simple; they answer, *The Father, The Son, and The Holy Ghost.*

And who are we to understand by each of these names, Father, Son, and Ghost?

Looking at me as if they would say, as the Roman said to Paul, "Art not thou that Egyptian which before these days leddest out into the wilderness four thousand men that were murderers?" they answer: *The Father, The Son, and The Holy Ghost are the three persons in the Godhead.*

These two questions being now answered, it would seem uncivil to enquire further. So when the Indian sage made the important discovery that the earth is supported by an elephant, and the elephant by a tortoise: he felt com-



placency in the solution of the question, What supports the earth in empty space? He would have thought the querist an idiot or heretic, who should have asked, on what the tortoise stood? This was a mystery.

Mr. Locke says, "Our knowledge being so narrow, it will perhaps give us some light into the present state of our minds, if we look a little into the dark side, and take a view of our ignorance; which is infinitely greater than our knowledge. This may serve much to the quieting of disputes, and to improvement in useful knowledge. We thus discover how far we have *clear and distinct ideas*. We confine our thoughts within the contemplation of those things which are within the *reach of our understanding*. We shall not launch out into the abyss of darkness where we have not eyes to see, nor faculties to *perceive any thing*. To be satisfied of the folly of such a conceit, we need not go far."

Locke and Paul were similar reasoners; and laid down similar rules in logic. They agreed that words, without ideas, are vehicles which carry nothing but elements of jangling. Men, who use words which convey no meaning, are, according to Paul, barbarians. "If I know not the meaning of the voice, I shall be unto him that speaketh, a barbarian: and he that speaketh shall be a barbarian unto me."—I. Cor. xiv. 11. • And it must be confessed, it sometimes makes men act toward each other as barbarians. Words must be defined, and used as signs of our ideas. Sentences must convey distinct mental propositions: or we are prone to "fight as those who beat the air."

"If," says Paul, "the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself to the battle? So likewise ye, unless ye utter words easy to be understood ("significant" in the margin, and "well signifying" in the Greek,) how

shall it be known what is spoken? For ye shall speak into the air." "I had rather speak five words with my understanding, that I might teach others also, than ten thousand words in an unknown tongue." "Let no man deceive you with vain words." He also speaks of some ministers who had "swerved from charity out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned; and turned aside unto vain jangling; understanding *neither what they say, nor whereof they affirm.*"—I. Tim. i.

He who saith, "there are three persons in God: and if I am asked, what I mean by these persons? my answer is, I do not know:" that man "speaketh into the air." Of what use are the words, if no ideas are connected with them? no not in the mind of the speaker himself? Will the senseless words sanctify and save the soul? And shall we be damned if we do not assent to words and sentences, where there is no connexion between language and thought? So it seems. For I am orthodox, if I say, "God is three one;" no matter in what sense; any sense; a mysterious unintelligible sense; no conceivable sense: but damned, if I do not. So I am told. This crushes the understanding of timorous mortals; and prepares them for sanguinary fanaticism; or for any purpose which can be turned to account. Paul and Locke were right. "Words easy to be understood;" "clear and distinct ideas; tend much to quieting disputes." (Appendix I.)

If there are three equal, intelligent, infinite persons; we have ideas. There are three Gods.

If we say, we mean something midway between three Gods and one God, we are bewildered. The light that is in us is darkness. And how great is that darkness?

If we mean an unknown something; we know not what that unknown something is. We "understand neither

what we say, nor whereof we affirm." To whom shall we erect our altar? "To the Unknown God."

If we pretend we believe in an unknown something; we reach after a supposed something, which in our understanding, is a real nothing: an illusory something, of which we must speak in language elaborately indistinct. Would not this tend to settle a bewildering influence; a confusion of thought; an inconvenient ignorance, on the minds of our hearers? Would it not be doing them a wrong?

"Pastors according to mine heart shall feed you with knowledge and understanding."—Jer. iii. 15. Pastors who teach their hearers to sing and pray to "Three in one, and One in three:" do they feed their flocks with "knowledge and understanding?"

An argument in favor of Three Persons in God, has been presented to me; and apparently with a view to silence me. And it has the effect. It is this. "Nearly or quite all true piety is with those who believe in our mystery. And nearly or quite no piety is with you who do not." What can I say? The sinful publican heard a similar comparison; and wholly against himself: a comparison instituted by a fellow worshipper who went up with him to the temple to pray. The poor man went down to his house without opening his mouth: except to say, "God be merciful to me a sinner."

Most sincerely do I acknowledge the piety of thousands and tens of thousands of the people who have been educated in these mysteries; and of those eminent reformers who knew not how to shake off all the manacles with which an ignorant ancestry and a crafty priesthood had early bound them. They have, in important respects, been burning and shining lights in the times in which they have lived. They have been God's workmanship, regen-



erated and preserved by the Holy Ghost ; justified by faith without the deeds of the law : conducted to heaven under the guidance of our Lord Jesus Christ ; to the praise of God's glorious grace. Such are redeemed from the earth by the blood of Christ : are saved on terms which exclude boasting ; on terms which redound to the glory of God who sitteth on the throne, and of the lamb forever and ever. God grant that my lot may be with such ; whatever mistakes now bewilder them. Should this be the event ; both they and I, as we rise from this state of darkness and clouded perception, will drop our cumbersome errors, with our cumbersome flesh : and henceforth use language void of ambiguity. In heaven, the light gained in an hour, may exceed all the feeble glimmerings of the present state.

Dishonesty, however, and uncharitable intolerance, and attempts to wield God's thunders over which they have no control ; are no better in trinitarians than in unitarians.

## REASON VIII.

*The confusion, embarrassment, and tendency to guileful evasion which the cabalistical propositions contribute to produce in preachers; are objections to their use.*

“WILL ye speak wickedly for God? and talk deceitfully for him?” says upright Job. Hundreds of volumes have been written on the subject, and divines are as yet in no wise agreed, what the trinity is. It is so contrived that from its indistinctness, it admits of endless controversy. It is like an object, scarcely descried through a mist, which can be defined neither in form nor dimensions. If we affirm that we believe it; and are asked, Believe what? we presently bewilder our hearers in subtleties too thin and shadowy for comprehension. When ministers preach on the subject as a first principle of faith; is there no danger of their falling into a spirit of guileful contrivance, to guard against self-contradiction and absurdity? Honest men, if mistaken, are still honest. I speak of the tendency of the mystery.

Example. A scheme of trinity, long and widely prevalent, is as follows. “A distinction of names and internal relations, which is drawn from different relative properties in the divine nature. Thus the Father, Son, and Spirit are a threefold repetition of the selfsame divine essence, with some inconceivable relation to each other; called paterernity, filiation, and spiration.”—Watts, Vol. 6. p. 377. Whoever will admit this is orthodox. Its influence in purifying us from heresy, is talismanic. I therefore transcribe Watts’ opinion of it.

“The common explication of the generation of the Son, and procession of the Spirit from the Father and Son, which was authorised in the latin church, was derived down to us from popish schoolmen; and is now become a part of the established faith in most of the protestant nations: because at the Reformation, they knew no better way to explain the trinity. They contented themselves to say, it is incomprehensible: and therefore forbid all further inquiry. Their account of the derivation of the Word and Spirit from the Father, seems to me, to be a set of *words* of which I can form *no ideas*. It was invented by subtle and metaphysical schoolmen, to guard as far as possible, against the charge of inconsistency: and was never designed to convey a clear conception to the mind of man.”

“The most approved writers represent it thus. The generation of the Son, is, the Father’s communication of his own individual essence to the Son; together with the personal property of being begotten. By this property, he differs from the Father.” •

“The procession of the Spirit, is, a communication of the selfsame essence both from the Father and the Son, unto the Spirit; together with the personal property of spiration or proceeding. By this property he differs from the Father and the Son.”

“How strange soever this language appears to persons who seek for *ideas* with *words*, I seriously profess this is the justest, and I think plainest description I can give. If it be possible to make it plainer, I will repeat the same in another form of words.”

“The scholastic scheme supposes the generation of the Son to be a sort of repetition of the selfsame essence of the Father, together with some new personal property called filiation, which joined to the divine essence, makes



up the person of the Son : and this repetition or reproduction of the divine essence, with its new personality, is owing to the Father only."

"It also supposes the procession of the Holy Ghost to be another repetition of the same essence ; together with some new personal property called procession, which joined to the essence, makes up the Holy Ghost: and that this repetition or reproduction of the essence with its new personality, is owing both to the Father and the Son conjointly : or as some say, it is from the Father as the original principle, by the Son as a medium."

"Some indeed have thought it was improper to say that the essence did generate, or could be generated or derived. They suppose only the personality of the Son was generated by the Father ; and the personality of the Spirit proceeded from the Father and Son. But when you enquire, What these personalities are ? they say, filiation or sonship ; and spiration or procession. On the whole, therefore, Son-ship is generated ; and Procession proceeds. But the generality of orthodox trinitarians go into the former sentiments of the generation and procession of the essence itself."

"I reverence the names and memory of those excellent men who have asserted and defended these opinions. But when I enquire of my own heart, whether ever I could form any *ideas* from this language, when in my younger days I *firmly assented to these sounds* ; I must honestly confess, I could not." (Appendix K.)

I believe that Watts made this confession honestly. And I solemnly believe that similar honesty would prompt those in our days who firmly assent to similar sounds, to make the same confession. Nor can I honestly call on my fellow men to assent to such unintelligible sounds ;

until I shall honestly believe that "ignorance is the mother of devotion;" and that it is a noble work of piety, to "darken counsel by words without knowledge."

Such too are the unmeaning words of the council of Nice, A. D. 325. Constantine the last of the heathen emperors, now become nominally a christian; and really the ecclesiastical, civil, and military head of the church, was president of this first general council. Their words are, "We believe in one God, the Father Almighty; and in one Lord Jesus Christ the Son of God, the only begotten of the Father; God of God; light of light; very God of very God; begotten, not made; of the same substance with the Father; who for us men, came down from heaven, and was incarnate by the Holy Ghost of the virgin Mary, and was made man. We believe in the Holy Ghost, who proceedeth from the Father and the Son."

This first council made out no formula of three persons equal in power and glory. Having imperial authority now with them; they judged it useful to assume an imposing attitude toward those pestilent wretches who doubted of their dogmas: and they anathematized those "who affirm that the Son is a different hypostasis (person) from the Father:" i. e. they pronounced their curse on those who maintained that the Son had any substance of his own.

It was discussed by this council, whether the Son was *ομοουσιος* (consubstantial) with the Father. Those who were in favor of *ομοουσιος*, said that it signified that the Son was of the substance of the Father; but not a part divided off from the essence. To some of the bishops who doubted of *ομοουσιος*, the president of the council, viz: the emperor, replied; that "by it he did not mean that the Son was of the Father, by any corporeal affections; nor by any *αποσπομη*

(sudden separation or dividing off:) for it was impossible that an incorporeal nature should admit of corporeal affections: but the thing was to be understood of a divine incomprehensible manner:” i. e. “an incomprehensible manner” of being “begotten, not made.” They on the whole pronounced consubstantial to be orthodox: and it has so remained to this day. And I apprehend it still means “an incomprehensible manner” of theogony: or Ab-ra-ca-da-bra.

Fifty-six years after, A. D. 381, Theodosius ordered another general council which assembled at Constantinople: and they decided more expressly that there are in God, three most perfect hypostases (persons.) By their authority they strove to crush “the pest of Sabellius, and the blasphemy” of other dissenters who stood in their way. And as the catholic church has depended more on the ancient councils than on the bible; they have with zeal defended the mystery of three persons: and accumulated numberless other mysteries which have advanced their sacred hierarchy. Nor is it marvellous that Luther did no more toward removing the mass of corruptions which had accumulated in the church. Had the pleasure of God continued his life to the present day; his mighty mind would probably have moved the Reformation quite beyond its present stand: and have cleared off some of the clouds which yet hang around the protestant mind; or which yet rest on its future prospects.

Professor Stewart has presented us with sundry modern illustrations of the sacred mystery of the trinity.—Letters to Channing, p. 43. “The celebrated Leibnitz was requested by Loeﬂer, to give him an affirmative definition of the persons in the Godhead. He sent for answer: ‘Several persons in an absolute substance numerically the



same, signify several intelligent substances essentially related.”

“On further consideration, he abandoned this, and sent a second: which was, ‘Several persons, in an absolute substance numerically the same; mean, Relative incommunicable modes of subsisting.’”

“If Leibnitz understood this, I believe he must have been a better master of metaphysics than any person who has read his definition. In fact, he does not himself appear satisfied with it: for not long after, he wrote as follows: ‘We must say that there are relations in the divine substance which distinguish the persons: since these persons cannot be absolute substances. But we must aver, too, that these relations are substantial. At least, we must say that the divine persons are not the same concrete, under different denominations, as a man may be said to be a poet and an orator. We must say, moreover, that the three persons are not as absolute substances as the whole.’”

“With quite as little success did that masterly reasoner Toellner of Frankfort, labor to define the subject. ‘It is certain,’ says he, ‘that we must conceive as co-existing in God, three eternal and different actions; the action of activity, of idea, and of the desire of all possible good within and without him.’”

“Three really different actions co-existing from eternity, necessarily pre-suppose three different and operative substrata. It is thus through the aid of reason illuminated by the scriptures, we come to know that the Power, the Understanding, and the Will of God, are not merely three faculties; but three distinct energies, i. e. three substances.”

“Turtullian’s, or the Nicene creed is as intelligible to me at this.”—p. 42.

From all these schemes of trinity, I, too, gain no knowledge. And I may say the same of twenty other schemes: as that "God is one in three, and three in one:" or this, "Three persons in God are three distinctions in God which are unknowable;" or this, "The mode of divine existence is such as lays a foundation for a distinction into three equal persons." I suppose the whole which is contained in all these creeds, so far as *ideas* are concerned, may be more succinctly expressed in this single proposition, viz. Three equal persons in one essence are Ab-ra-ca-da-bra. If the expressions contain an *idea*, or a *particle* of sense; how microscopic the eye which can discern it!

Now if learned ecclesiastics, who make these creeds, are compelled to use such ambidextrous caution in selecting their words; and are so disagreed in them; and so unable to fix on any account of their meaning, lest they contradict themselves: let the honest man judge: can a vast company of preachers of all degrees of capacity from the least to the greatest, go out and preach and defend them; without *temptation* to guileful equivocation?

There will be among their hearers, some discerning upright souls, who will not practice guile themselves; nor believe that guile belongs to religion; nor be passive when their understandings are imposed upon.

One will say to his minister; Explain to my understanding what you mean, when you say, "Our God is one only in number; and yet three persons; each of whom is our God. Our God is one in number, in respect to his essence; but three in regard to persons. Two or three persons cannot exist, where there is only one essence. For to constitute more than one person, more than one essence is required. For what is person, but one intelligent essence? or in what way, I pray you, does one per-

son differ from another, unless by diversity of numerical essence ? This implies that the divine essence is one only ; yet there is more than one person ; although the divine essence which is one, and divine person, are identical."

Toellner also comes up, and says : " You teach that the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, are each a particular person endowed with understanding : and at the same time neither of them has his separate being, his separate understanding, his separate will, his separate power of action : but all three have only one being, one understanding, one will, one power of acting. You therefore affirm that there are three real beings truly separate : each having his own power of acting, and not having it : three separate persons, and three persons not separate."

Taylor, too, presents his difficulty. " There can," says he, " be no real distinction between the Father and the Son, unless they so differ, that what is peculiar to the Father, is wanting in the Son : and what is peculiar to the Son, is wanting in the Father. Now that excellent property which belongs exclusively to the Father, or exclusively to the Son, must be numbered among the excellent perfections of God. It follows that some excellent property is lacking both in the Father and in the Son. Neither is endowed with infinite perfection. It must be conceded then that the essence of the Father and the Son, is not the same."

Hearers have a right to expect that their minister will imitate Paul ; who said, " We have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty ; not walking in craftiness ; nor handling the word of God deceitfully."—II. Cor. iv. 2. If hearers suspect that they are to be treated as reasonable beings ; they will take the liberty to be inquisitive : and



preachers must say something. And can they remove the difficulties which hang heavily on their schemes of equal persons in the Holy One? Can they guide an intelligent querist or candid objector, through the dark mazes, with a torch of light? Is not a minister constrained to talk round about the subject? to keep on the look out, lest he expose his ignorance, or appear feeble, or contradict himself? Is he not conscious of an embarrassment which (even if he be honest) exposes him to some temptation to shifts and twists and guileful equivocation? Is he not compelled adroitly to substitute one word for another? and after exhausting all verbal refinements, to flee to mystery that he may escape from absurdity? If he is, my objection has weight. If not, not.

Conversing with ministers in the utmost familiarity, I have found them using words with strange and unusual meaning: successively changing the meaning: qualifying the meaning: substituting new meaning: disowning all obvious meaning: till I have been unable to perceive that any meaning whatever was left. This is as well known to me, as any fact whatever.

It would seem to be a bold, but not pious attempt to undertake to analyze the Divinity, regarding the Godhead as a compound; and resolving it into its constituent parts. Many of the former patrons of these mysteries have had an interest in guilefully using them to excite the reverence of the multitude. We cannot otherwise account for their anathematizing and burning as heretics, those who saw through their craft. It is not meant that this proves any one of their schemes of trinity untrue. It only proves that those who so supported the trinity, were murderers. They applied fear and torture; where the proper weapon, if it existed, was evidence, or argument. At the same time,

those schemes with the usual means of supporting them ; have had (as learning has advanced) a serious influence in lessening confidence in clerical rectitude ; and in producing that deism which has been so prevalent among the learned in Europe and America. To their influence may probably be traced the following remarks of a great statesman and scholar, and strictly moral man. "The clergy are ready at the word of the Lawgiver, if such a word could be obtained, to put the torch to the pile, and to kindle in this hemisphere, the flames in which Calvin consumed poor Servetus, because he could not find in his Euclid, the proposition which has demonstrated that Three are one ; and that One is three : nor subscribe to that of Calvin, that magistrates have a right to exterminate heretics." —Jefferson's Works, vol. 4. p. 322.

To the same mystical policy as the proximate or remote cause, may probably be traced the following sentence, in a Letter to Gov. Gerry of Massachusetts. "The mild and simple principles of the christian philosophy, would produce too much calm, too much regularity of good, to extract from its disciples, a support for a numerous priesthood : were they not to sophisticate it, to ramify it, to split it into hairs, and twist its texts ; till they cover the divine morality of its author with mysteries ; and require a priesthood to explain them." —Jefferson's Works, vol. 3. p. 468.

Who can say that such reflections do not spontaneously arise in a mind conversant with history ? with historic views of the Catholic priesthood, the Greek priesthood, the mystics who have abounded, the priesthood of the dark ages ? History shows men and their motives without disguise. And readers do better judge of the actors, than when they see them in their masks, in the living world.

Professor Stewart says, "The history of past ages exhibits an appalling picture of disputes about the person of Christ. The very last age witnessed a dispute in Germany between theologians; whether the humiliation of Christ consisted 'in abstinence from both the direct and reflex use of divine majesty;' or, in the 'occultation of divine majesty:' a dispute which agitated the Lutheran church to its very centre."

Intelligent men witnessing the mysteries and janglings of such theologians, very reasonably conclude that they derive their theology from "chaos and old night:" and that if the bible has given countenance to such theology, the bible itself must have had the same origin.

But the Professor frankly and truly states what now is; that "if we are to credit one mode of representation; the greatest portion of Christ's humiliation consisted in his having renounced and absolutely laid aside his Divinity, during the time of his incarnation: and that as God, *in this diminished condition*, he did actually expire on the cross. All the powers of language are exhausted to shew how great must be the sufferings and condescension of Christ, in undergoing such a degradation as this."—Letters, p. 91.

"The most ingenious and learned Dr. Wallis makes no scruple to say, the word person, when applied to The Word and Spirit in the divine nature, is metaphorical, analogical, and figurative. Yet he was esteemed an orthodox trinitarian."—Watts, vol. 6. p. 368. To this trinity, the adjective equal is inapplicable.

Watts himself says, "If the doctrine of the trinity cannot be explained in a literal sense, lest we make three Gods; I esteem it much safer to construe the terms of personality in a figurative sense. One Divine Being with his powers of knowing and effecting, will allow a figura-



tive personality to the Word and Spirit ; and accord with certain scriptural representations.”

“As outward speech and breath are powers of the human body ; as reason and vital activity are powers of the human soul ; so analogically, God is a being with powers which he is sometimes pleased to describe by the terms Logos and Pneuma, Word and Spirit, speech and breath, or reason and active efficiency.” “Yet,” he continues, “I will by no means contend for the word person to express these divine powers.”

Calvin also describes the Word and Spirit as the wisdom and power of God the Father : yet he calls them persons.

If we suppose a minister understands his creed ; and believes that God is One literal person ; and that he speaks in certain passages, as sending forth his Logos and Pneuma, his Word and Spirit, as analogical persons ; will he lead uninformed people to profess belief in three persons equal in power and glory ; and not inform them that they are not all persons in the same sense ? For surely those assenting to the church Articles, have no suspicion that they are metaphorical and analogical ; and not literal and infinite persons. Nor can they. For they are made to profess that these persons are equal to one another in power and all perfections. Nor will they suspect that the minister himself, in a mental reservation, believes them to be persons in different senses. And if he does so believe, can he honestly conceal his belief ? and leave those whom he receives into the church to imagine real persons ; and grope along in the dark as well as they can ? I suppose not.

Watts was unincumbered with these difficulties. “And where,” says he, “the personal characters attributed to

Christ in scripture are too literal to be solved by such figurative personality; let it be observed that Christ had a distinct human nature, a body and soul in union with Divinity. And surely in this, he may and does use the personal pronouns I, thou, he. This will abundantly solve the attribution of personal ideas to Christ. The man Jesus is a proper person. And his union with Divinity does not destroy his personality. And the whole complex being, or God-Man, hath sufficient personality to use the same pronouns."

"And as this sufficiently accounts for personal ascriptions to Christ, since his incarnation; it will solve such personal ascriptions to him before his incarnation. For God formed and assumed his soul into union with himself, before the creation of the world."

I ask permission to imitate those good men who contend not for the word person to express either divine powers or supposed distinctions in God. For the bible never uses the word person for any such purpose. How much less for three infinite agents in God, "equal in power and glory!" i. e. equal in all divine perfections! I have disused such language towards forty years, that I might be free from temptation to guileful ambiguity in my instructions. And had I done otherwise, I know not how I could have honestly prayed, "Lead us not into temptation." (Appendix L.)

One remark more. On subjects less serious than religion; it is contrary to all rules of correct composition; "to jumble metaphorical and plain language together: to construct a period so that part of it must be understood metaphorically; part literally: which always produces confusion."—Dr. Blair's Lectures on Rhetoric.

## REASON IX.

*The expressions "God is three one:" "three persons, all equal, co-eternal, partakers of Divinity:" "three persons in one substance:" "triune:" "holy, blessed, and glorious trinity:" these furnish no facilities for understanding any one passage in the bible; but altogether the reverse.*

MEN blindly yielding their understanding to a pompous creed, which they do not comprehend; nor know how their teachers construe; dare not examine the bible freely. They dare not suppose it to mean what it says. Prejudging that their mysteries are true, whatever else is not true; that these mysteries are somehow in the bible; if not on the face of the text, yet discernible to their guides: how do they read? When the article of their creed is exactly contradicted by some passage of scripture, they put some far fetched construction on that scripture; or think it rather strange; or that it needs the aid of a commentator, or verbose expounder.

The orthodox creed says, "the Son is equal to the Father." The Son says, "My Father is greater than I." Which is true with the common man? The creed. For he believes the eternal Son begotten of the Father in his own substance, is the second person in God, and equal to the Father. So far all is plain, and not to be denied. What next? He supposes the Eternal Son, having "veiled his Divinity in humanity;" and contracted it into a narrow compass: "as GOD in this diminished condition, he did actually expire on the cross." And while "in such a degradation as this," he could mysteriously say, "My Father is greater than I;" though he was truly and fully equal to his Father.



A man says to his neighbor, "I have devised a plan for the recovery of my prodigal son. My plan involves particulars which are kind in their design: but the success of the whole requires that they be kept secret: and as yet I know that they are locked up in my own mind. For who can see what passes in the recesses of my soul? But my own spirit surveys them with delight, and will reveal them in due time." This is "the artless language of nature."

The plan of saving man by Christ was, in many of its circumstances, kept hid in God for ages. And before revealed, is called "mystery," and "hidden wisdom." Nor could it be penetrated by any intelligent being in the universe; till God himself was pleased to reveal it. For who could discover the councils of his heart? No one except his own omniscient spirit. This, too, is "the artless language of nature."

These cases are compared and illustrated in I. Cor. 2., where Paul inspired to make known the good designed for sinful man by God, says: "We speak forth the wisdom of God, which in a mystery was kept hid, which God ordained before the world unto our glory; which none of the princes of this world knew. As it is written, eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath *revealed* them unto us by his spirit. For his spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. For who (*τίς*) knoweth the things (secret counsels) of a man, save the spirit of the man which is in him? Even so, the things of God (his eternal purposes) knoweth no one (*οὐδεὶς*.) but the spirit of God." This is "the artless language of nature." Plain people, unsophisticated with phisosophy (falsely so called,) could not miss the meaning. And would they suspect "the Spirit of

God" is a third person among three persons in God? any more than that "the spirit of the man" is a third person among three persons in the man? Yet Dr. Dwight uses this text "in support of the 'Personality' of the Third among the Three."—Vol. 3. p. 6. Is the bible thus rendered intelligible? or unintelligible?

## REASON X.

*The expressions which are so unmeaning in theory, are equally alien to experimental religion.*

UNDER the most powerful influences of the Holy Spirit ; when God forces on sinners a conviction of their guilt and ruin ; when their spirits are overpowered with fearful apprehensions of the just but insupportable wrath of their Holy Sovereign : these futile expressions vanish from their minds.

Selfishness is so total, so rooted, so controlling in the hearts of men since the fall, that they never will be free from it ; nor from the curse of God which follows it : unless they are new created ; born again ; by the omnipotent Spirit of God. His resistless energy alone takes away the base exclusive self-love in the heart ; and causes disinterested love to spring up in its place. He makes the wretched enemy feel what he is ; what he has done ; what he has deserved : and what he is to expect, if justice and judgment are to proceed in his deplorable case. Now his hopes from himself are gone. Instead of abounding in righteousness and good works, as compared with publicans and harlots ; he is absolutely vile and unrighteous, as compared with God and his law. An heavenly temper being divinely imparted to him ; God and his law are his delight. He despairs of help from every arm of flesh : and he cries to sovereign grace for pardon : and he finds it can be obtained through the atoning sacrifice of the Son of God. He is consoled : rejoices in hope.



What has produced this change in the man? God, who is a Spirit; and who has access to the sinner's spirit: God, by his spiritual unseen influence. Not the man himself; nor his fellow man. No person in the universe, but the only One God. The rebel man with his selfish heart and pride, and hopes all broken down and prostrate; is glad to receive hope and forgiveness and salvation from grace: and on terms which place him side by side with the chief of sinners; and he ascribes his deliverance and the glory of his salvation to God on his immovable throne, and unto the Lamb that was slain.

All this is effected not by birth, nor by the will of the flesh, nor by the will of man, but by God: by God, who hath mercy on whom he will have mercy: by the "Holy Ghost, who is God; employed in his most benevolent and wonderful work, that of restoring holiness to the soul of man; in his most glorious character, that of the Sanctifier; in a work demanding the supreme gratitude of mankind; in a character demanding their supreme gratitude and love."

The salvation of lost man, is by the same power of the Highest; the same irresistible influence; which at first brought forth the earth, and arranged the elements from chaos: and poured light and beauty on a world which the Creator himself pronounced to be "very good."

The conversion of the soul dead in sin, is by the same Almighty power in Christ Jesus, which will give life to all who are literally dead. Men's speculations are bewildered in their common times; with a number of persons arranged in their offices, and equal in Godhead: When ransomed from spiritual bondage; they think no more of several persons in God, than will the dead when springing from their graves.

The regenerated behold in Jesus, "the image of the invisible God." In his life, and temper; they behold the very temper which reigns in infinite strength in the Divinity. The Father "draweth them" to the Son. The "Son revealeth the Father" to them. "No one can pluck them out of the Son's hand. The Father is greater than all. And no one can pluck them out of the Father's hand."

And when the saints, under the guidance of this Divine Person, are disarmed of their malignant spirit; when they are in their nearest approximations to Christ and God the Father; and full of disinterested kindness to man; when, in fine, in their most heavenly frames: their mysterious three have no place. In this state of mind, they would no more injure a fellow sinner, or burn an heretic; than they would blaspheme God, or revile his Son.

Such is the difference between the honest christian, and the monopolizing hypocrite: between the living minister of Christ; and those who "say they are apostles, and are not, but do lie."

The converted, when their love is waxed cool, may be trained to various human systems. Custom may reconcile them to the endurance of human impositions. If ignorant, and rigidly taught the absurd dogmas of a sect; they may revere those dogmas. Those who, with sinister aims, impose absurdities on them, have the greater sin.

And how remote will three equal persons be from the thoughts of all saints and all sinners, when rising in swarms from the sleep of death, they will be caught up in the air; and behold the land and the seas burning below? when "God shall judge the world in righteousness by that man, through whose lips the sentence will pass, from which there is no appeal? All his ransomed ones will by him be made kings and priests unto his God and Father. All

his "enemies will be his footstool."—Ps. cx. 1. The first begotten Son, "ruling in the Majesty of the name of Jehovah his God," will have reduced all things under his absolute sway : with the single exception of "him which did put all things under him. And when all things shall be subdued unto him ; then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all."—I. Cor. xv. 27.



## REASON XI.

*The mystery of trinity of persons in God ; three, equal, and one ; interpose difficulties in the way of understanding the personal and mediatorial character of "the man Christ Jesus."*

WE now speak of him who "came forth from the Father :—" "the first begotten Son :—" who was "in the form of God," and assumed "the form of a servant :—" who was "rich and became poor :—" who obeyed and suffered : who "finished the work he was sent to perform on earth :—" who prayed to be restored to "the glory which he had with the Father before the world was." Not one of these expressions is applicable to the uncreated God : and every one of them exclusively pertains to the begotten Son, "the man Christ Jesus."

To me it seems that little account is made of this personage by the fashionable theology. Yet he is great, both as he existed before his incarnation ; and as he exists since his exaltation. Gabriel said to Mary, "Thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a Son. And he shall be GREAT ; and shall be called the Son of the Highest." John the Baptist thought himself "unworthy to stoop down and unloose the latchet of his shoes."

Preparatory to what will be offered under this and the next Reason, we premise that, the scriptures obviously teach that there are in Christ two distinct natures, or literal persons ; God and Man united in a transcendant manner ; so as to be one complex person.

My soul is not my body : and my body is not my soul. I, however, call my soul and body united, myself : and in-

clude them both under my proper name. I can also contemplate them severally and apart. I can reason concerning their powers, diseases, and remedies, as understandingly, as if they were separated. *How* they are united; or of the *manner in which*; I have no knowledge; and consequently no belief.

The Supreme God is not the Man Jesus. And the Man Jesus is not the Supreme God. United, they are one complex being, and object of worship. A created and an uncreated mind are more similar than soul and body. And I perceive nothing absurd in their union. I call God and Man united, my Savior, or my Lord, or by the proper name (by usage become a proper name) Jesus Christ. Yet I can contemplate them severally; and reason understandingly concerning their powers, attributes, and rank. Those things which in the bible are said of Christ, which can be said only of Supreme Divinity; I refer to his Divinity. And those things which in the bible are spoken of Christ, which can be said only of a nature inferior to the unchangeable Jehovah; I ascribe to his humanity. And in my apprehension, infinite confusion disfigures the common theology from inadvertently confounding these divine and human attributes and acts: sometimes ascribing those things which are purely divine, to the man; and those which are applicable only to the man, to the Divinity: sometimes making Jehovah a feeble distressed mortal or servant; and sometimes making the man or child, the invisible God: and as the result, marring the beauty and confounding the character and station of each; and obscuring the consistency and glory of the united whole.

These evils may, I think, be traced to the dark contrivance of trinity in unity, and unity in trinity: and to a denial of the pre-existence of Christ's human soul.

The soul and body of each child of Adam, "the man Christ Jesus" excepted, come into existence simultaneously, by human generation. Had it pleased God to have created our souls all at once, at or before the beginning of the world; and to have united each soul to the body prepared for it, when that body existed by procreation; he would have done so.

The bible teacheth that, as to the man Christ Jesus, God actually did, in some moment of his own eternity, create his soul, as "the first begotten of every creature;"—Col. i. 15: and "the beginning of the creation of God."—Rev. iii. 14. He existed in the form and likeness of God; and mysteriously united to him, ages before the body prepared for him was conceived in the virgin. His soul had as noble a pre-eminence above other human souls in its origin; as his body had pre-eminence over other human bodies; having no Father but the Holy Ghost: so "that he might in all things have the pre-eminence."—Col. i. 18.

In every part of his being, in soul and body, God was his Father: and he was the Son of God. And in every sacred passage where the title SON OF GOD is applied to Christ; it is exclusively applied to his created nature: and never once to his divine nature. Christ's Divinity is unbegotten, unborn: and is never Son, servant, messenger, angel, or man. Christ's Divinity has no Father, no Mother, no Parent, no Origin. Nothing is said in scripture of his Divinity, as to his being, station, rank, attributes, or acts; below or beneath the dignity of God Supreme, invisible, immortal, unchangeable.\*

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\*"The generation of the Son of God, as *divine*, as *God*, seems to be out of the question: unless it be an express doctrine of revelation: which is so far from being the case, that I conceive the *contrary* is plainly taught."—Stewart, p. 42.

When will preachers recognize the truth expressed in this extract? and cause their hearers to understand it? Whenever this shall be; "The pillar of the



It seems to me that there is no need of our thoughts becoming confused, when in reading the scriptures, we find Christ represented in the sublime characters of true and eternal God ; and in the inferior characters of a derived, dependent being, existing “with God” from the beginning ; “in the bosom of the Father ;” “coming from the Father

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cloud” which has so long “been darkness,” will “give light to Israel.” In the following passages, the Professor informs us that “Son of God” does not mean the *divine nature* of Christ, but his human nature.

Phil. ii. 9.—“Wherefore God hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow,” &c. “This is predicated of that nature which is capable of obeying, and of being rewarded.” “In a similar way, ‘All power is given to him’ in heaven and earth :” “i. e. he is *constituted* ‘head over all things to the church.’” “Acting as such, ‘All enemies are put under his feet.’” “And this dominion will be resigned at the final Judgment.” (This is the Son in whose name we are baptized.)

“Of the same tenor are the following passages : I. Cor. xi. 3—‘The head of Christ is God.’ I understand it of that nature of which this can be predicated.” “When Christ is called ‘The image of the invisible God :’ ‘the brightness of God’s glory :’ ‘the express image of his person :’ or ‘the only begotten of the Father :’ ‘the Son of God :’ ‘God’s own Son :’ ‘his dear Son :’ I understand all these as descriptions of his mediatorial nature and station.” The Professor means that all these denote the man Jesus ; as is apparent from the next sentence. “I know indeed that many of these texts have been appropriated by some trinitarians, to prove the *divine* nature of Christ : in my opinion injudiciously, and without any solid reason.” “Texts of this class may be found in Mat. xvii. 5—‘This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased :’ John, i. 14—‘The Logos was made flesh, and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth ; and we beheld his glory, the glory of the only begotten of the Father :’ John, x. 36—‘Say ye of him whom the Father hath sanctified and sent into the world, Thou blasphemest, because I said, I am the Son of God ?’ Col. i. 13—‘Who hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son :’ Heb. i. 5—‘Unto which of the angels said he at any time, Thou art my Son ; this day have I begotten thee ?’ Rom. viii. 29, 32—‘Whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first born among many brethren.’ ‘He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all.’” &c.—p. 125.

In none of these passages can the Professor discover a Son as God, as Divinity ; or a Son equal to the Father in power and all divine perfections. Nor can I. I know indeed that these texts are used by most trinitarians to prove the

into the world ;" obeying and suffering ; " ascending up where he was before ;" " glorified with the glory which he had with the Father before the world was."

Can we not understand when we read of the visibility, the locality, the dependence, the sufferings, prayers, and intercessions of the Son ? and of the invisibility, the omnipresence, the independence, and superiority to prayers and tears of the unbegotten Divinity ? and this God and Man united from before the foundation of the world, as one co-existing, co-acting, agent ? one object of our love, and trust, and worship ? Why can we not (at least in most cases) as easily ascribe the things which belong to pure Divinity, to Divinity ; and those which are inferior to Divinity, to the humanity of Christ ; as we can ascribe thought to our souls, and fingers to our bodies ? Why can we not understandingly worship " God manifest in the flesh ;" as well as do obeisance to our earthly governor ? We bow to the governor who is flesh as well as spirit. We worship Christ who is God and Man.

But to speak, as the common theology does, of some real and natural subordination of an Eternal Son to an Eternal Father, and both equal : or, to suppose the Father only is self-existent and unbegotten ; and the co-eternal Son's existence, and power, and begotten Godhead, are to be referred to the Father as the spring and fountain of it ; and think this will account for those sublime and inferior

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divine nature of Christ : but in my apprehension injudiciously, and without any solid reason.

And if the second person in the trinity appears in none of these texts ; I know not where to look for him : or for a Son who is God Supreme having a Father.

Dr. Watts says, " I know no text which gives Christ, considered as God, the title The Son. Son of God is the Humanity of Christ." Such, too, is the doctrine of the learned commentator Dr. Adam Clarke of the Methodist denomination.

expressions : or, to think of priority and posteriority of order between the Father and the Son in the Godhead itself : or, to suppose the Son who is equal to the Father in essence, is inferior in mode, or condition ; or economically subordinate, obedient, and submissive : or, to say the eternity and necessity of existence of the Son, 'make him divine ; though derived from the Father by a mystical generation : or, to suppose the Father, Son, and Spirit are united in one Godhead, though they are three distinct intelligent agents or real persons : or, to speak of God supreme, as a creature ; and of man, as God supreme : any of these are dark. They need the mollifying construction of interpreters. They need many hard figures of speech. They lay a foundation for very perplexed ideas ; or rather banish all ideas. And they need, like transubstantiation, to be shrouded in mystery : where the multitude may be occupied in exploring mazes which lead to nothing.

These sad devices owe their existence, in part, to the grand error that Christ's soul had no existence previous to his coming in the flesh, and being born of Mary.

#### CHRIST'S PRE-EXISTENCE.

" No man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man *who was* (ο ων, imp. tense, not '*who is*') in heaven."—John, iii. 13. This " man," " even the Son of man," is not the invisible God : but is the very MAN Jesus. He says, he " came down from heaven ;" and " ascended up to heaven." " He that cometh after me, is preferred before me," says John the Baptist, " because he was before me."—John, i. 30. It is not true that the man Christ was before John, *as to the flesh*. For he was six months younger. *As to his soul*, he was before John, and before Abraham, and before Adam.



“He that cometh from above, is above all; he that is of the earth is earthly and speaketh of the earth: he that cometh from heaven is above all.”—John iii. 31. “The first man was of the earth earthy: the second man is the Lord from heaven.”—I. Cor. xv. 47. “Which,” says Bishop Fowler, “the apostle speaks of Christ’s original in opposition to Adam’s. Adam’s soul was created on earth, a body being made out of the earth for it: but the soul of Christ was created in heaven, and is therefore the Lord from heaven.”

“The second man who is the Lord from heaven,” no more means the Supreme God, than “the first man.” For it is the apostle’s design to show that as we live and die on earth after the pattern of the first man Adam; so the man Jesus who came from heaven shall be the pattern of the saints, raised at the last day. As the soul of the man Christ came down from heaven, and assumed a body on earth; so the souls of the saints shall come from heaven, and assume their immortal bodies on earth. The parallel of bearing the image of the first and second Adam is just. And our Lord or his apostles could not have expressed his literal descent from heaven in plainer words.

“The bread of God is he which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world.”—John, vi. 33. “I came down from heaven not to do my own will, but the will of him that sent me.”—ver. 38. God always does his own will; and is never sent down from heaven. There is no one who can send him. If Christ’s soul did not pre-exist in heaven, how could he be sent down from heaven, to do either his own will, or the will of another who sent him? But he is express in asserting that he was there before he came down. “What and if ye shall see the Son of man ascend up *where he was before*?”—ver. 62. Does

the common theology believe this of " the Son of man ?" Not at all. It denies that " the Son of man" ever was up in heaven before ! or, that he ever came down from heaven ! or that he so much as existed ! It does indeed pretend that the Eternal Son, the second person who is God Supreme is " the Son of man," and pre-existed. If this be true, then man is the Father of God ; and God is the Son of man. This is pagan theology. It reverses the theology of the bible, which represents God as the Father of man. " He that ascended up on high, descended first to the lower parts of the earth. He that descended, is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens."—Eph. iv. 9.

" I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world : again, I leave the world and go to the Father."—John, xvi. 28. " Glorify thou me, O Father, with thy own self ; with the glory which I had with thee before the world was."—John, xvii. 5. How plain, if the soul of Christ was " the first born of every creature ?"—Col. i. 15. And if, as first born Son, he had glorious dignity with his Father in heaven before the world was ? and in all the following ages, till he divested himself of it at his incarnation ? " Father I have finished the work on earth which thou sentest me to do : I have delighted to do thy will, O my God."—Ps. xl. " And now, O Father, take me to thee in heaven where I was : glorify me with the glory which I had in the beginning : my days of abasement are accomplished : let the splendor, and riches, and form of God which I had with thee before the world was, be restored."

That it was the created nature, and not the divine, which was thus glorified in its pre-existent state, is clear from John, xvii. 24—" Father, I will that they be with me, that they may behold my glory which thou *hast given me* : for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world." This

would be a very inapt thing for Christ to say as to his *divine nature*. It would make his Divinity quite a different thing from the divinity of the Father; and quite inferior: so inferior as to have his glorious honors *given to him*.

Christ's Divinity had no glory *given to him*: and he never prayed to be restored to any glory of which he had been disrobed: neither had his Divinity any Father to pray to: neither was the Divinity in need of any thing: nor did he ever offer any prayer to any God or Person. And it is infinitely impossible that he ever will, world without end.

Our Lord J<sup>es</sup>us really emptied himself of peculiar glories which he possessed in a pre-existent state. Scripture leads us so certainly into this sentiment, that trinitarians are obliged to describe God the Father as parting with his Son (as Divinity) out of his bosom. They represent the Son (as Divinity) leaving the bosom of the Father: (as Divinity) quitting the felicities of the upper world: (as Divinity) laying by his glorious estate; parting with heaven; coming down to earth: (as Divinity) born of woman, making prayers in his distresses; and wishing to get back, so soon as the will of him who sent him would permit, to the glory which he had with the Father before the world was. All this is infinitely impossible in reference to the Divinity of Christ: but fitly represents the humiliation of his pre-existent soul.—Vid. Watts p. 594.

“That very being which came down from heaven is represented as having a will different from the will of God; and therefore he must be inferior to God. Now this could be no other than the will of his human soul. At his agonies and passion he had such a will, when he manifested the innocent reluctance of human nature at first; but af-



terwards said, ' Father, not my will, but thy will be done.' Luke, xxii. 42. Now it would sound very harsh to represent Christ as God, saying, I came from heaven, not to do my own will, but the will of him who sent me : when it is eternally impossible that the Godhead of Christ should have a will, different from the will of another who sent his Godhead."—Ibid. This would decidedly make two divine persons; two Supreme Gods.

" In the same manner our Lord speaks in prophecy, ' I delight to do thy will, O my God : yea, thy law is within my heart' (a law that he should come in the flesh, and be made a sin offering.) This prophecy is cited in Heb. x— ' When he cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice, and burnt offering, thou wouldst not, but a body hast thou prepared me:—lo I come to do thy will, O God.' This seems the proper language of his human soul; not of his Divinity. Those who refuse to expound this of his pre-existent soul, apply it to his Divinity in his inferior or delegated character as mediator; and as the Father's servant employed in this grand errand."—Ibid.

But it is eternally impossible that his Divinity should have " a delegated character," or an " inferior character ;" or be " servant;" or sent on " an errand." And now, as always, we are compelled to observe that they who do not acknowledge the true personal character of the man Jesus, his pre-existence, his mediatorship, and his " pre-eminence in all things;" do necessarily degrade his Divinity also.

" Neither let us tempt Christ as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed of serpents."—I. Cor. x. 9. " Ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor."—II. Cor. viii. 9. The literal person who was rich in heaven, be-

came poor on earth. "If to evade this, any one will say, he was rich as God, and poor as man ; Bishop Fowler answers : this is such a strain and force upon scripture, that it looks like laying hold upon any thing at a dead lift."

"Who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be like God (to exist on in the form of God :) but made himself of no reputation. . . . .and was made in the likeness of men."—Phil. ii. 6. The adjective "equal," found in this verse, in our translation, originated with the trinitarians. There is no Greek adjective corresponding with it, meaning "equal," or meaning any thing else.

"Who is the image of the invisible God, the first born of every creature : for by him were all things created ; and he is before all things."—Col. i. 15. He must have been before all things, if he created them. But how could he create them ? Is not God the creator ? Heb. i. 2, will answer—"His Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds."

"Christ is 'the first born of every creature.' Much art and criticism have been employed to apply these words to the divine nature, by an unusual construction. But suppose his soul to exist thus early ; and he is 'the first born of every creature' literally : and he is literally 'the beginning of the creation of God,' as he styles himself, Rev. iii. 14."—Watts, p. 609.

All the passages which represent Christ before his incarnation, in a nature inferior to the supreme God ; necessarily lead us to believe the pre-existence of his human soul. His Divinity is nothing less than God Supreme. In the old testament, Christ is sometimes represented as Jehovah : and sometimes as a man, angel of the Lord, Captain of the Lord's hosts : visible to patriarchs, conversing with Abraham, wrestling with Jacob, encouraging Joshua,

Gideon, and others. His pre-existent soul is, in the old testament, represented as having both natural and deputed powers, superior to those of other angels. He was Michael : i. e. " who is like to God ?" He was " angel of God's presence," prince of angels or archangel : still a spirit suited to a state of union with a human body ; as well as union with God. For at times from the beginning he assumed a body with the natural acts and appetites of a man. And as a man he was often sent to perform acts and services for the people ; some of which were quite too low for the dignity of Supreme God. He appeared to the patriarchs as *a man* ; in the character of a *messenger* : and consequently in a *nature*, and in a *character*, distinct from Jehovah. Divinity is not man or messenger.

Thus when Israel blessed the two sons of Joseph, he said, " The God which fed me all my life long unto this day ; The Angel which redeemed me from evil, bless the lads."—Gen. xlviii. 15. Here the uncreated and the created persons, the Divinity and Humanity, the Sender and sent, the God and man, are jointly addressed by our father Jacob. The common theology says that as man, he did not yet exist. Jacob knew better : for he had wrestled with him ; and seen him ; and prayed to him for his blessing. He knew him to be a glorious angel or spirit, in whom God dwelt ; and by whom he pronounced words, and performed acts of judgment and mercy. Seeing him, he says he " saw God face to face : and made supplication to him."

With this agrees Exod. xxiii. 20 ; where God says to Moses, " Behold I send an angel before thee to keep thee in the way. Obey his voice. Provoke him not. For he will not pardon your transgressions. For my name is in him." Here the angel is sent by God ; and is consequent-



ly inferior to God. Yet he must be obeyed with reverence. For he would punish or pardon. How so? For the same reason that he could forgive sins in the days of his humiliation. "*My name is in him.*"

His pre-existent soul united to Divinity, is called "The Angel of his presence." "In all their affliction, he was afflicted: and the angel of his presence saved them. And he carried them all the days of old."—Isai. lxiii. 9.

Whoever will read the first chapters of Genesis, may easily perceive that God having created all things by Jesus Christ, appeared to Adam and Eve visibly as a man: conversing with a human voice: in a bodily shape: and thus made it known that he had formed them in what he called "our image." God's Logos, his speaker, who said, "Let us make man in our image," is by Paul declared to be "the image of the invisible God." He made our first parents in his image, even as to their bodies and organs of speech and living spirits; as well as with "knowledge, righteousness, and holiness," resembling those perfections in the boundless God. How else could such dialogues be carried on? How could Adam and his wife seek to hide themselves from his presence, if he had not manifested a visible presence? or how know his voice, if he had not conversed with them by a human voice? The man Jesus was as visible to them as we are visible to one another: and unquestionably he was surrounded by the resplendent brightness with which he is described in his now glorified state, in the book of Revelation: and in which he was, in a less degree, surrounded, on the mount of transfiguration.

In this effulgence he appeared on mount Sinai, when Moses and the seventy elders "saw God." And as Moses caught some of this luminous brightness, we cannot doubt

but our parents before the fall, were shrouded in its splendor. And the departure from them of this effulgence, on their transgression, was among the "signs of woe that all was lost." In a moment they were ashamed of their nakedness; and sought to avoid the face of God, by hiding themselves among the trees of the garden.

The Great God was accustomed of old to appear with a bright cloud, or flame of fire: and from this proceeded a voice, assuming the awful names of Jehovah, God of Israel, I am that I am. Whence all who saw and heard, knew that "THE LORD was there." Sometimes, however, amidst this fire, was the form of a real MAN, called the angel. This was the MAN afterwards called Jesus of Nazareth.

So it was when he passed before Moses, who had prayed; "I beseech thee, shew me thy glory." He put Moses in the cleft of a rock; that by his intervening hand he might prevent Moses from seeing his face, which now shone with an effulgence too bright for his organs of vision: and having passed him, allowed him to see his back parts, which shone with more endurable rays. He proclaimed at the same time, his Divinity, and his very heart. "The LORD God: merciful and gracious; long suffering: abundant in goodness and truth: keeping mercy for thousands: forgiving iniquity, transgression, and sin: and who will by no means clear the impenitent."—Exod. xxxiii. At a time just before this, "All the people saw the cloudy pillar at the tabernacle afar off from the camp: and Moses went into the tabernacle: and the Lord spake to Moses face to face, as a man speaketh unto his friend."

He who is here called "Lord;" even the speaker who talked with Moses face to face: is by Stephen, Acts, vii. 38, called "the angel:" "the angel which spake to Moses in the wilderness." Now we can say, "the angel" or mes-

senger who spake to Moses face to face, is the pre-existent soul of Jesus Christ, in a body temporarily assumed. But if we say "the angel" was the Divinity of Christ, we forget what Divinity is. We are tainted with the spirit of those who "changed the glory of the uncorruptible God, into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and four footed beasts, and creeping things."—Rom. i. 23. Otherwise we could not call Divinity "the angel:" "sent:" messenger.

It was the pre-existent Logos in a human form, that dwelt in this brightness in the wilderness, and was "the angel:" and it was the Divinity which dwelt in this man; or this angel. For at times he assumes the awful names of Divinity: and at times, inferior names and titles. God and man are united.

And how are the glories of the man Christ Jesus overlooked, when all these historical facts are overlooked? and even his ancient existence denied? and when the ancient decree is forgot, "Thou art my Son;" "sit thou at my right hand;" "rule thou in the midst of thine enemies;" make them thy footstool? Not only his ancient, but his present regency over saints, and over the uttermost parts of the earth, is unobserved.

If the Son did not yet exist, and the second psalm is only a prediction that God would have a Son ages hence; why were the ancient kings, and judges, and dwellers on the earth enjoined, "Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little: blessed are all they that put their trust in him?"—Ps. ii. 12.

And how is the Divinity of Christ lowered down by the theology which denies the pre-existence of the Son, the first born of creatures? His Divinity is lowered to the rank of Son, angel, sent: receiving law and commission as



prophet, priest, king on my right hand: acting a part subordinate to another person who is economically his superior, and really his equal. Does his Divinity lose his jealousy for his great name thus? Quite impossible.

Is it not beneath the grandeur of all that belongs to Godhead to come down and supply the place of a human soul for the actions of animal nature? Did an Eternal Person in God, become an angel, and animate a body which appeared to the ancients, to Moses, and the elders of Israel? And did this invisible God suffer himself to be called a man? and one sent on an errand? Did Almighty God animate a body, and walk with two other angels, himself an angel too? and visit Abraham? and tarry with him several hours under a tree? while Sarah made cakes, and dressed a calf for God to eat? And did God eat of the cakes and of the calf dressed with butter and milk?—Gen. xviii. Vid. Watts.

Did Jehovah the second person wrestle with Jacob in human limbs? and spend a good part of the night thus wrestling, till break of day?—Gen. xxxii. And why is he called “a man?”—ver. 24. And an “angel?”—Hos. xii. 4. God Supreme, whether as first, second, or third person, is not a man; or angel; or servant.

At the same time the angel in question was not a common angel. For then the high claims and titles of Divinity could not have issued from his mouth in connection with the inferior titles of a man and messenger. But being the pre-existent soul of Christ, God’s first begotten Son in heaven, even “the angel of his presence,” “in whom was his name,” or himself; all is intelligible; all is becoming and wise.

The same angel came and sat under an oak and conversed familiarly with Gideon; and tarried while Gideon

made ready a kid, and unleavened cakes, and broth in a pot, and presented them unto him under the oak.—Judges 6.

I know not one passage of scripture which will authorise the belief that one part of the Godhead, detached and sent down another part of the Godhead : or that a second person in God and equal to the Father, was ever sent down from heaven to earth to do any thing : still less to sit under an oak in a visible shape : or to eat veal, and butter, and milk : or to wrestle : or to stand on a wall with a plumb-line in his hand : or as “God in a diminished condition” to obey or suffer : or to pray to his Father to restore to him “the glory which he had with the Father before the world was.”

I do not believe that a “Son begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father, very God of very God, came down from heaven, and was incarnate by the Holy Ghost of the virgin Mary ; and for us men was crucified, and buried, and rose again :” and that this Eternal Son being the second Person in the trinity, after his resurrection from the dead, “ate a piece of broiled fish and of an honey comb.” Such mysteries need to be set forth with much cautious verbosity. For when the subject is stripped of its mystical dress, and presented naked and without disguise ; we lose all reverence for it. While we ascribe divine characters to a created nature, and inferior characters to the divine ; we can collect darkness around ourselves ; and with Harpocrates crying, “It is a mystery : be silent !” we can feel reverence. But taking the bible for our guide without the creeds ; and the mysteries are scattered : “God is light :” and we are ashamed of the illusions in which our senses are abjured, and our reason lost.

With the scriptures before me, I cannot credit a scheme of theology which lowers so immeasurably the Majesty of Christ's Divinity. Nor can I credit a scheme which hides from our view his pre-existent humanity: the riches he exchanged for poverty: "the form of God" which without "robbery" he might have continued; and which he voluntarily exchanged for "the form of a servant:" and his yielding up his life for his enemies, when he could have commanded more than twelve legions of his angels to destroy them in a moment.

While we overlook the glory which "the first begotten of every creature" had with the Father before the world was; and his mighty agency in conducting the affairs of the world from the morning of time; we are wont to withhold from him the glory which is his due in his present regency over all the earth. I mean the man Christ Jesus. The common theology questions his capacity to judge the world: and urges this as an argument (instead of the true arguments) for his Divinity. It says that "that man whom God hath ordained," "by whom he will judge the world," "to whom he hath committed all judgment;" cannot know all the secrets of the countless millions which will stand before him. It maintains that his Divinity only will know all the merits and demerits of those millions: and that the Man who will act as visible judge, will act in the dark; when he shall say, "Come ye blessed;" and "depart ye cursed."

Governor Festus said of Paul his prisoner, "It seemeth unreasonable to me to send a prisoner to Augustus, and not withal to signify the crimes laid against him."—Acts, xxv. 27. And will the Man Jesus doom sinners to an eternal hell, and not know exactly for what? Is not this degrading that Man by whom God will judge the world in righteousness?"



And is it thus that as ministers of the word, we are to set forth the peculiar honors of the "One Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus?" qualifications and pre-eminences which belong to his sacred soul and body? powers and authorities derived to the Man from his exaltation to the throne in heaven; and from his union with Godhead?

We may not always find it easy to say exactly how far the human nature is the immediate subject of some sublime actions and honors; and how far they must be ascribed to the in-dwelling Divinity. Nor do we always precisely mark the boundaries of the rainbow. Yet scripture has clearly taught the exaltation of our nature in the Man Jesus to the right hand of God; and to inconceivable knowledge and power and splendor. And do we honor him whom the Father delights to honor; when we refuse to learn his personal glories, his reign in heaven, and his mediatorial government over all the earth? Jesus our prophet has never taught us to strain one line of his word in order to exalt his Deity, or sink his Humanity. And when we take the liberty to do so; we invariably degrade both his Divinity and Humanity. Do we not dishonor our blessed Savior when we refuse to read the distinct, though united honors of both? Do we not leave the example of inspired men?

Peter in his first sermon, Acts ii, speaks of Christ, "exalted by the right hand of God."—ver. 33. Who is thus exalted? "Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God."—ver. 22. Whose Son? "Of the seed of David as to the flesh."—ver. 30. Whose Lord? David's as to his spirit. For Peter quotes the Psalm in which David says, "The LORD said unto *my Lord*." Still Peter says, he was the "man that was taken and crucified and slain."—ver. 23. 'The man whom God raised from the dead.'—ver. 32.

The man 'whose soul (not whose Divinity) was not left in hades:' nor 'his flesh' left in the grave long enough to 'see corruption.'—ver. 31. This man 'was exalted by the right hand of God.'—ver. 33.

This man is expressly called the Mediator in scripture: whereas, Christ as God, is never expressly called the Mediator. 'There is One God, and One Mediator between God and men, The Man Christ Jesus.'—I. Tim. ii. 5. (Appendix M.)

This man was 'the holy child Jesus,' whom God anointed, and 'made both Lord and Christ:' against whom the heathen raged, when they 'were gathered together against The LORD, and against His Christ.'—Acts, iv. 25, 26, 27.

#### WHY WAS THIS *MAN* EXALTED?

As a reward of his labors and sufferings. 'Therefore shall he divide the spoil with the great, because he poured out his soul unto death.'—Isa. liii. 10. How high is he exalted? 'He humbled himself, and became obedient unto death. Wherefore God hath *highly* exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name; that at the name of Jesus, every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things on earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.'—Phil. ii. 8. He was David's Lord of old. But his Lordship is extended. He is 'Prince' not only 'of the kings of the earth:'—Rev. i. 5: but 'exalted far above all principalities and powers in the heavenly places:'—Eph. i. 21: and even demons and satan are so perfectly subject to him, that at his order, they fall like lightning from their usurped thrones.

'Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals. For thou wast slain: and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood.'—Rev. v. 9.

Divinity was not 'slain.' Divinity is not exalted and rewarded, because humanity 'was slain.' Nor can Divinity be exalted at all: save in the esteem of creatures. The sufferings of the man cannot be rewarded by elevating the station or enlarging the rights of the independent God.

The man Jesus, expressly called 'The Son,' knew not the day of judgment when he was on earth. He has now a scene of futurities spread out before him, to which we can prescribe no limits: except that he is not omniscient. The book of the Revelation begins with the declaration that 'God gave to Jesus Christ the knowledge of things which must come to pass.' 'The Lion of the tribe of Judah hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seals.'—Rev. v. 5. 'The lamb that was slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God, came and took the book out of the right hand of him that sat on the throne, and opened the seals.'—ver. 6. The Lamb is the offering for sin; the man: not God. He must needs understand the divine counsels by which the church and the world are to be governed till all enemies are brought under his feet. For with his unknown powers, and as mediator, and as united to Divinity, it is given to him to reign over the nations, and to judge the world. Divinity knew all that was in the prophetic book, while it was yet sealed.

Observe that he is declared 'Worthy to open the seals,' on this account, viz: 'he has redeemed us to God by his blood.'—ver. 9. Surely it was not Godhead; nor any supposed Person in Godhead, that was converted into a 'Lamb' and shed his 'blood' for transgressors. Yet Paul says, 'God's mighty power set him at his own right hand in heavenly places, far above all principality and power and might and dominion and every name that is named, not



only in this world but also in the world to come : and hath put all things under his feet.' And that the mighty power of God raised him from the dead.—Eph. i. 20. Whose God set him at his own right hand? Verse 17 answers. 'The God of our Lord Jesus Christ.'

Here I ask in reference to these identical passages. Does The Son of God, our Lord Jesus Christ, mean The Man? Or, the second person The Eternal Son in the substance of God, and his 'Equal in power and glory?' If the latter, then God the Father is not only Father to God the Son; but he is God to God the Son. And God the Son has received by way of gift, 'all power in heaven and earth;' and it was given to God the Son as a reward of his humiliation and labors and sufferings, when he was in the lowly condition of a 'Lamb' led forth to the slaughter: and the Father's 'mighty power wrought in Jehovah the Son, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand.' Do we honor, or dishonor God by ascribing to him, such an abasement and advancement? such contraction and expansion? such an accursed death and dependent resurrection?

Watts says, 'If we do not suppose it to be the human nature which is endued with authority, we shall be forced to interpret this text thus, viz: God raised the human nature from the dead, and set his human nature at his own right hand; i. e. on high above the clouds: and put all things under the feet of his divine nature: which seems but a shifting and evasive exposition. No man who reads it with an unbiassed mind, would use this strange interpretation.'—p. 549.

All powers and authority are inherent in God, and without gift. The inferior nature which is capable of receiving rewards and gifts, is not equal with the Father in

power and glory. So thought Paul. Rom. xiv. 9—‘ To this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived, *that he might be Lord both of the dead and living.*’

### HIS POWERS.

It may be asked, How can he exercise Lordship over the ‘ dead and living ?’

This question needs not to be asked ; since God says, *it is so.* We readily admit that ‘ the Son who knew not the day of Judgment, and could of himself do nothing ;’ and who ‘ both died and revived ;’ is still not omniscient. His mediatorial dominion to which he is exalted, does not extend, like the dominion of pure Divinity, to the boundless infinitude of space ; and to worlds brought to our view by modern astronomy. ‘ There is one mediator between God and men :’ not between God and the inhabitants of distant worlds. ‘ Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession.’ The dominion of him who ‘ died and revived’ clearly extends to our world and race ; and to the enemies of our race : and to the heavens which contain his legions, of angels whom he sends as ministering spirits to the heirs of salvation. What concerns us, concerns Christ. For we are his ; and he is set over us as Lord. ‘ Let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God hath made that *same* Jesus whom ye crucified, both Lord and Christ.’ ---Acts, ii. 36. He therefore controls all beings and events which promote or obstruct our salvation.

Within these limits are contained all things in the following, and similar passages. ‘ At the name of Jesus every knee shall bow, of things in heaven, and things on earth, and things under the earth.’ To Divinity, every knee shall bow, on worlds where a mediator is not necessary : on worlds so distant, that what has befallen our race,

may be unknown for millions of ages yet to come; and may delight them exceedingly when made known to them.

At the end of the present state of our world; the heavens and earth, reserved unto fire, will melt with fervent heat. It is supposed by Dr. Dwight and other principal divines, that the conflagration will not extend beyond this globe and its surrounding atmosphere: or not beyond the influence of sin in our race: at any rate, not to worlds of unfallen beings dispersed through all the infinitude of space.

Our conceit very naturally leads each of us to think that our dear self is rather the most important being; and that our world is a main part of God's works: and the work of redeeming man, quite the greatest work in which Jehovah is engaged. Any being who is "without partiality," and "no respecter of persons," must judge of us very differently.

Some very wise men have understood that most of the expressions in the Mosaic account of creation, are applicable only to our solar system: or to worlds in our neighborhood as compared with other worlds too remote for our eyes and telescopes and imaginations.

With these hypotheses would harmonize the facts, that God created those works by Jesus Christ: that his deputed dominion extends to them: that he originally existed with reference to the race he was to redeem: that all beings who can influence us for good or for evil are within his government: that they were created *for* him, as well as *by* him: and that he was filled with delight when he saw them rise into existence. "The Lord possessed me in the beginning, before his works of old, or ever the earth was. I was brought forth, when there were no fountains abounding with water. When he prepared the heavens, I was there." When he appointed the foundations of



the earth, I was by him, as one brought up with him. And I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him : rejoicing in the habitable part of his earth. And my delights were with the sons of men.'—Prov. viii. Was not this the Logos, the Archangel, the Son of God in heaven ? who 'came down from heaven ?' and who was the Son of Man on earth ? Millions of angels were and are under his orders, to execute his works of judgment and mercy. He has led captivity captive, and has power over the armies of hell. All good beings on earth and in heaven follow him. All the wicked on earth and in hell are leagued under the prince of darkness against him. Each follows his leader : and the war will last till Messiah shall bring all under his feet. 'Michael and his angels fight against the Dragon : and the Dragon fights, and his angels.'—Rev. xiii. 7.

And shall Christ's prophets and apostles, and judges who by him rule on earth, have a portion of power given them ? and shall not God's first born Son have the plenitude of it, now that the Father has exalted him at his right hand ? now that 'in him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily ?' Could Moses divide the sea with his rod, and turn flints into rivers ? Could Joshua say to the sun, Stand still ? and arrest the moon in her course ? Could Paul make fevers and dropsies depart at his word, and flee at the appearance of his handkerchief ? Could Peter heal the sick, and command Tabitha to arise from the dead ? And cannot the man Christ Jesus with the wisdom and power of in-dwelling Godhead, rule time and nature as he please ? and manage all things in heaven and earth, mortal and immortal ? when, too, it pleased the Father to exalt him to his own right hand for this very purpose ?

'Unto which of the angels said he at any time, Thou art my Son ? this day have I begotten thee ? But unto the

Son, he saith, ‘Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever. Thou lovest righteousness; and hatest iniquity: therefore God, even THY GOD hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows.’—Heb. i. Reading this chapter, we see the agency of the Son in creation, acting with ‘God, even His God.’ We see him governing the world: and we learn his superiority to angels, whose prince he was, and is. Yet one of his angels, so inferior to the Archangel, is able, when sent with a pestilence, to destroy 70,000 of Israel, on account of David’s sin.—II. Sam. xxiv. One of his angels could slay 185,000 Assyrian soldiers in the camp of Sennacherib in one night.—II. Kings, xix. Even Satan, prince of the power of the air, when permitted, could raise storms and hurricanes, and send lightnings from heaven.—Job i.

When we limit our conceptions of the powers of the created soul of Jesus, and bring them too near our own; it is because we have too high a conceit of ourselves; and too low an opinion of God. We are ready to fancy the difference between ourselves and Jehovah so small, that a mind so superior to our own as that which David and Paul and Peter ascribed to God’s first born Son—(Ps. ii. 110: Heb. i.: Acts ii.) especially since his descent into hell, and exaltation above all heavenly powers; must be immediately raised to Godhead. Then we do err, not knowing the scriptures, nor the boundlessness of God’s works and Divinity. There may be endowments in one created spirit, excelling those of our whole race. And if there be a spirit of such vast and unknown endowments; we need not marvel that such should be the soul of Jesus, united to the illimitable Jehovah; exalted as God has declared him to be, since he descended into hades: and of whom God has decided that ‘he must in all things have the pre-emi-

nence.'—Col. i. 18. Vid. Watts's 'Discourse on the extensive powers of Christ's human nature in its present glorified state.'

But is it within the scope of our understanding, (with any revelation yet made to us,) to limit and define the powers, and authorities, and honors of the Son? With profound submission, we say, by no means. For this is a part of his revelation itself. 'All things are delivered to me of my Father. And no man knoweth who the Son is, but the Father.'—Luke, x. 22. This declaration is broad and distinct. The things pertaining to the personal character of the Son which are not yet revealed, are as yet mysteries: and consequently do not yet 'belong to us or to our children.'—Deut. xxix. 29. Belief concerning such things is out of the question. They may be revealed to us, and of course belong to us, and entertain and delight us, in the future ages of blessedness. We shall 'see him as he is.'

Let us not, however, forget the injunction, 'Grow in grace; and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ;' in so far as he *is revealed*.—II. Pet. iii. 18.

It is revealed that he 'ascended up on high far above all heavens, that he might fill all things; after he descended first to the lower parts of the earth; and gave gifts unto men.'—Eph. iv. 'The same Jesus whom the Jews slew and hanged on a tree, God exalted to be a Prince and a Savior, to give repentance unto Israel, and remission of sins.'—Acts v. He can succor tempted christians, 'being an high priest who was tempted in all points as we are; and can be touched with a feeling of our infirmities.'—Heb. iv. 'He is able to save to the uttermost all who come to God by him, because he ever liveth to make intercession for them.'—Heb. vii.



‘Nor can we suppose that Christ intercedes for all his saints, not knowing their persons and trials. Every christian does this. When we read that our great high priest is passed into the heavens, and can be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, having himself been tempted as we are: the expressions are inapplicable to his Deity. They refer to his Humanity. And would the scriptures encourage our application to the Intercessor in such tender language; if he knew only that there are thousands of tempted saints on earth, of whose sorrows he had no exact knowledge?’

Full of hope and consolation, we may individually apply to a mediator and to God in him. That mediator said, ‘Father, I know that thou hearest me always.’ His will that his poorest disciple shall be relieved, instantly moves the power which moves the universe.

If we love the Lord Jesus in sincerity, we shall not coldly call him Master. We shall be concerned to honor him, not only as Supreme Divinity; but as Son in humanity; in all the offices he is anointed to fill: confining ourselves only to what is revealed: and not intruding into mysteries, or ‘the secret things which do not belong to us, nor to our children.’

When the apostle had described him as ‘a man,’ and ‘Son of man,’ or second Adam, Heb. ii. 9, he adds: ‘We see Jesus, diminished for a little while below angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor.’ This descent from the glory which he had with the Father before the world was, and this death, he sustained in obedience to his Father; and in disinterested kindness to men. He who did so, is entitled to the recompense.

## HIS HONORS.

Honors are paid to him in heaven, agreeably to his Father's will. Not only men who are redeemed by his blood ; but angels round the throne, say with a loud voice, ' Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing.'—Rev. v. And every creature in heaven, and on earth, and in the sea, join their honors and blessing to him that sitteth on the throne, and unto the Lamb forever. The man, the Lamb, the victim, is assumed into union with God : is on the right hand of the Majesty on high. The whole complex person is jointly adored.

The soul of Jesus, which was not left in hell, (hades,) is indeed highly exalted. He beholds all the knees bowing to him ; and hears all the tongues confessing him to be Lord, to the glory of God the Father. How else do they at all recompense his sufferings ? How else, surrounded by millions of sinners redeemed by his blood, do their thankful songs assure him that they are voluntarily at his feet ? and effectually restored to the character and privileges of faithful subjects ?

Has he who conquers earth and death and hell, sitting with his Father in his throne ; has he none of the recompenses, and honors, and worship, ascribed by thankful hearts to their Savior ? Then are the scripture representations fabulous. And theologians may represent God's Anointed Son, as recompensed some other way, viz : by making a luminous figure in heaven like an elevated balloon : above the clouds or stars : but ignorant of the honors done him on earth, which he can neither rule nor judge.

Let those preachers pause, who winding themselves up in mystery, neglect to study the things which are *revealed*, as to the personal character of the Son of man who is ready

to judge the quick and dead. . We are inexcusable, if we remain ignorant of what *is revealed* concerning Christ : whether as God with his unchangeable perfections ; or, as man with his inferior characters : his Sonship ; his Messiahship ; his Mediatorship ; as angel ; as servant ; as prophet, priest, king ; as anointed ; receiving offices and gifts ; receiving law ; obeying ; dying ; reviving ; reigning.

Against what has been advanced under this Reason ; some trinitarians will probably object, that The Man Jesus is described as too ancient : and by far too great : and worst of all, that he as a creature sitting on the throne in conjunction with Divinity, is made an object of worship ; contrary to the first command of the decalogue.—[Appendix N.]

I answer in the words of Watts. ‘ If these two propositions are revealed in scripture, viz : Religious worship belongs to God alone : and The man Jesus united to God is exalted to some kind of partnership in this honor : I would choose to believe them both. I do not see any evident contradiction in them : though perhaps I may not have hit upon the best way of reconciling them.’—p. 270.

The objectors not satisfied, will further say : It results from this theory, that the worship we render to God ‘ who sitteth on the throne ’ and unto ‘ the Lamb that was slain : ’ is superior and inferior worship.

I answer : the difficulty hangs equally on *every scheme* which trinitarians can adopt : unless they shall say that the Man Christ Jesus is worthy of no thanks, or worship, or doxology *at all*. Let them honestly and openly profess this. They will then be sufficiently separated from those who ‘ cried hosanna to the Son of David ’ on earth ; and from the elders in heaven ‘ who sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and open the seals :



for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and nation ; and hast made us unto our God, kings, and priests.'—Rev. iii. 8.

That the man Jesus will visibly preside on the great day of Judgment, is exactly taught in Matt. xxv.—'When the Son of Man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, he shall sit on the throne of his glory : and before him shall be gathered all nations. And he shall separate them.....Then shall the king say to them on his right hand, Come ye blessed of my Father .....For I was an hungered.....Then shall the righteous answer him, Lord, when saw we thee an hungered ? .....And the king shall answer, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.'

The invisible God is not 'the Son of Man : ' nor has he any 'Father : ' nor are there any beings in the universe whom he calls 'these my brethren.'

Yet in this account, there is a visible actor : and he is 'the Son of Man ; ' 'sitting on the throne of his glory : ' and has a 'Father : ' and poor 'brethren : ' and is addressed, by the righteous, as 'Lord : ' and styles himself 'King.' He is 'the Man Christ Jesus.'

And now, To which of the Persons in the Godhead is this Man united ? to the first, or second, or third ? In which will he appear co-existing and co-acting as Judge ? I answer : In God the Father. For he says, 'The Son of Man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels : and then shall he reward every man according to his works.'—Matt. xvi. 27. Other Persons in the Godhead make no figure in these great transactions.

To pretend that another divine person besides the Father, is the Divinity of Christ ; amounts to a denial of his

**Divinity.** Jesus never once mentioned that other and second person as his Divinity. He always spoke of The Father as the Divinity who was in him ; and in whom he was.

## REASON XII.

*The mysterious trinity of persons in the one essence of God, as some suppose ; or, in the mode of his existence, as others say : The sacred three, equal, and one : these interpose obstacles to any understanding of the Divinity of Christ : and I think, dishonor him as God. This, I have in part anticipated under the last Reason.*

THAT this, and the last Reason, are not wholly without weight, I suppose, others do sometimes feel. I repeat from Professor Stewart. "It would seem, if we are to credit one mode of representation, that the greatest portion of Christ's humiliation consisted in his having renounced and absolutely laid aside his Divinity, during the time of his incarnation : and that as God, *in this diminished condition*, he did actually expire on the cross. All the powers of language are exhausted in order to show how great must be the sufferings and condescension of Christ, in undergoing such a degradation."

"On the other hand, some who revolt from these representations, verge to the other extreme. Lest they should degrade the divine nature of Christ, they are so careful to separate the human nature from it, that one is compelled to suppose that the MAN Jesus had simply a higher degree of inspiration and communion with God, than other prophets. The new testament does not seem to me to justify either of these extremes."—p. 91. Neither the old or new testament seems to me to justify either of them. And I despair of their discontinuance ; till they who guide the opinions of men, shall better study and better understand and better explain the bible : and better define the technical terms of their creeds.



If there are three persons in God who are all equal ; equally independent, eternal, and supreme : we must suppose that each is equally ‘ jealous for his holy name.’ Else they must be persons of dissimilar feelings and character. And who of poor sinful worms of the dust shall have the boldness to rank them as first, second, and third ? and speak of priority and posteriority among them ?

Does one of them fill heaven, and the heaven of heavens ? and in his being and government extend from earth to the milky way ; and from the milky way to space and worlds infinitely beyond ? so the other two extend : and fill the same boundless realms.

Each of the Three is the Maker and Sovereign of creation ; with equal rank, ‘ equal in power and glory :’ equally demanding obedience from the immensity of intelligent beings : equally incapable of subordination or obedience : each creating, but uncreated : giving, but not receiving gifts : worshipped, but not worshipping : unchangeable in rights and in claims : equally bowing the whole creation to his pleasure ; and submitting his will to no one.

Such, we know, is the One God. And if there be Three, ‘ equal in power and glory,’ such must be each of the Three.

And who will dare to say that concerning one, which he will not say of the other two ? all being equal. Who will presume to say that one of them has taken all the rights of Godhead into his own hands ? and that another, viz : God the Everlasting Son, has become subordinate ? or yields his own will that he may do the will of another ? or receives an office and is sent ? or that he can lay aside his glory ? or make himself of no reputation ? or ‘ being in the condition of God, take the condition of a servant ?’ or suffer any diminution of riches ? or make prayer or give

thanks? or waive his authority and honors? Is he not 'jealous for his holy name?'

I hear such things attributed to the Divinity of Christ. And I cannot but think any one of them would undeify him.

And believing that the mediation, and atonement, and intercession, and government and revelation of God's anointed Son, are expressive of 'good will to men;' and lay a foundation for the consistent reign of grace unto the eternal life of those who believe: and that the availableness of that mediation, atonement, and intercession, depends on the union of Divinity and Humanity in our Savior Christ; I dare not thus undeify him: especially as the bible teaches none of these absurdities.

'If ye had known me, said Jesus, ye would have known my Father also: and from henceforth ye know him, and have seen him. Philip saith unto him, Shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us. Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? He that hath seen me, hath seen the Father. And how sayest thou, Shew us the Father? Believeest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? The words that I speak unto you, I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works. Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me.'—John, xiv.

Here are the Divinity and Humanity. Christ never intimated that he had any other Divinity. He never ascribed his divinest works to any other divine Person. 'Our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ. He is antichrist that denieth the Father, and the Son.'—I. John, ii. Any supposed Divinity of Christ inferior to the Father, is but a quasi Divinity. I dare not be res-

possible for associating other Persons with God the Father ; making them his equals.

‘ If the Divinity of Christ be another distinct principle of consciousness ; this approaches so near to the doctrine of another God, that it is very hard to distinguish it. So far as our ideas of arithmetic and reason can reach, this seems a plain truth : If one infinite Spirit be one God, two or three infinite Spirits must be two or three Gods. And though the patrons of this opinion suppose these Three so nearly united as to be called One God, merely to avoid the charge of polytheism ; yet this One God must be one complex infinite Spirit made up of Three single Spirits. If this were the true notion of the One God, it is very strange the scripture does not reveal it.’—Watts, p. 455.

Christ expresses his Divinity by declaring his oneness with the Father. In no instance does he ascribe his works to any other divine person who dwells in him. If the Father was *not* his Divinity, and another person *was* ; he never attributed his supernatural works to the person which *was* his Divinity ; but always to a person which was *not* his Divinity. ‘ I am sure, says Watts, this sort of representation leads our thoughts away from supposing Christ to have any Divinity at all.’ With such representations, I am sure, that however we amuse our imaginations with our triplex Godhead ; the man Jesus is a mere man, and very fallible.

Passages from the old testament cited by writers of the new, and applied to Christ ; refer to the One God, the God of Israel, the Almighty, and Jehovah. If Christ as God be a different person ; these citations are out of place. But if, as Paul affirms, ‘ In him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily ;’ they do indeed prove his grandeur and dignity as ‘ God over all.’



They who judge otherwise speak of a divine nature of Christ which 'thought it not robbery to be equal\* with God:' but by an arrangement among themselves, made himself of no reputation; humbled himself and died. To what lower degradation has pagan theology reduced their Gods? Good men cannot wish to lower the Divinity thus: nor, when the subject is stripped of insidious disguises, do they admit that they mean so. Nor are they to be anathematized. Their mystical creeds lead men of uprightness to this extremity, while they are not aware of it. How else could one of the wisest of them say, 'Being in the condition of God, he did not regard his equality with God as an object of his solicitous desire: but humbled himself, (assumed an inferior or humble station,) taking the condition of a servant, being made after the similitude of men; and being found in fashion as a man, he exhibited his humility by obedience, even to the death of the cross?' This is not a translation of Phil. ii. 6, and on. Nor is there any Greek word in that passage which means equal, or equality. And scripture teaches that God always magnifies himself; and denies that he has any equal: and on pain of his eternal displeasure, he commands all creation to extol and magnify him. His glory is 'an object of his solicitous desire;' and of the 'solicitous desire' of all who have his spirit.

No son of Adam can be forgiven or saved; except on terms which secure to God all his glory. Hence the mediation of the Son. Even *temporary* abasement, subordination, official inferiority, and subsequent exaltation; are never in scripture ascribed to the person of God. On such terms, our salvation is impossible. Such terms are in direct opposition to the whole design of the atonement. We

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\* The false translation of Phil. ii. 6, aids this delusion.

are never taught in scripture that God the Father has exalted the Divinity of Christ from some lower station ; or ‘given him all power in heaven and in earth :’ or given him any reward for any voluntary abasement : or given him any office, high or low. Such representations lower the Divinity of Christ too near to the ideas and characters which heathens ascribed to their inferior Gods.

Divinity is never in scripture represented as sent down from heaven to earth : as being rich and becoming poor : as thinking it no robbery to be equal with God : as co-equal, co-eternal, and consubstantial with some other Divinity or Person : as veiling his glories ; or shrinking into narrow dimensions. He will not have his station, or honor, or character, questioned in any respect. Atonement, instead of temporarily abasing the Divinity of Christ, was designed unchangeably to maintain his integrity, and truth, and justice, and unimpeachable majesty as Lawgiver : even while he reverses the sentence of death against the pardoned sinner.

We sometimes hear such expressions as these : Christ is ‘*substantially* divine :’ of one *substance* with God : he *partakes* of the divine nature. Such expressions denote doubt ; and lead us to imagine that the divine nature of Christ is at best but a part of the Godhead : one third part. We involuntarily think that some portion of the Divinity, detached from the rest, adhered to the man Jesus. ‘The sentiments of the mystics originated in the doctrine of the platonic school, which was adopted by Origen and his followers. It taught that the divine nature was diffused through all human souls.’—View of Rel. p. 192.

So the Artemonites in the second century taught that at the birth of Christ, a certain portion of the divine nature united itself to him.

So also, in the fifth century, the Angelites held that the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost are not the same: that no one of them exists of himself: that there is a common Deity existing in them all: and that each of the three is God by a common participation of this common Deity. These schemes, I suppose, would secure any man's character from the blur of heresy.

More than one considerable writer has represented that both the Son and Spirit have some real and proper communion in the divine nature: some participation or share in the Godhead. This cautious language denotes a bewildered feeling along, not knowing where to place the foot firmly. A rank economically inferior to the Father is given to the Divinity of the Son. And the Holy Ghost the third blessed person is economically postponed to both the other two. For he is made to proceed from both the Father and the Son, by whom conjointly he is clothed with an office, or sent on a mission. And these are economical mysteries: unintelligible; and therefore orthodox.

But in contradistinction from all quasi divinities, and inexplicable persons; the scriptures teach us to believe that the Divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ is 'Jehovah:' 'I am that I am:' 'the Lord God of the holy prophets:' 'the Father:' indivisible: with no equal; with no one who may be compared with him. He manages the universe, of which the earth is comparatively an atom: unchangeable in his decrees: unchangeable in his station and perfections: as blessed since the reign of sin and death on earth, as before: as blessed and exalted when his Logos was on earth and on the cross, as from everlasting.

Such is the heresy for which we are buffeted on earth: and the truth of God, as maintained by the heavenly messengers. If trinitarians claim to believe the Divinity of



Christ; 'I more.' I apprehend the bible teaches it in a threefold higher sense than they: and that it exalts his Humanity above their conceptions, in an equal proportion: and further, that what it teaches is intelligible.

## REASON XIII.

*Trinity: Three in One, and One in Three: Three equal persons in one essence: these expressions, with the aid of transubstantiation, have obliterated the scripture meaning of the word Mystery.*

THE word Mystery in the preceding sentence, is a bible word. Not one of the other technical words in the sentence is found in the bible. Yet such has been their power that they have changed the meaning of the word Mystery; and obliterated the sense of the passages in which it occurs.

Mystery as now currently used, denotes some doctrine incomprehensible to man: or something which, though deemed to be true, no thought can reach: or something having apparent contradictions and absurdities which cannot be explained. In this sense, mystery is applicable to many Articles in human creeds: but in this sense, it is used in no passage of scripture.

Our catholic forefathers all believed that their priests had the miraculous power of turning bread and wine into the very flesh and blood of Jesus on the cross. This is the Mystery of transubstantiation. And while priests are believed to possess this power; they command the reverence and money of their flocks. To deny this sacred Mystery in catholic countries, is heresy. For what is heresy in ecclesiastical parlance? What do we understand by it, when we read history? The answer is obvious. Any sentiment which impedes the course of clerical avarice and ambition.

Two hundred and eighty years ago, Queen Mary mounted the throne of England: and she determined that her subjects should return to the church of Rome, from which her father Henry VIII. had brought them off. In her

first convocation, the majority of the clergy were on her side. And so undeniable did they deem transubstantiation, that they offered the protestant members to argue the point with them. The protestants, though browbeat, pushed the dispute : and the catholics acknowledged that Christ did, in his last supper, hold himself in his hand ; and swallow and eat himself. Did this convince the catholics ? By no means. They said, It was a Mystery.

To oppose a Mystery by such feeble arguments as these : that a man cannot swallow and eat himself : or, that it is impossible for the same thing to be, and not to be : or, that the whole is greater than a part : or, that three are not one : would be like “ stopping the ocean with a bulrush.”

So far from yielding their Mystery, they pronounced the protestants heretics : that nothing but the most extreme depravity of heart could induce men to contest such self-evident truths. They let loose the laws in their rigor against them ; and burned them at Smithfield and other places.

The protestants, though they rejected the mystery of transubstantiation ; yet most of them retained the mystery of three persons in one essence. Philpot, at this time Archdeacon of Winchester, being a protestant, disputed with another protestant who denied the mystery of the trinity. And Philpot spit in his face. He said, he did it to relieve his soul of the sorrow he felt at such horrid blasphemy ; and to signify how unworthy such a miscreant was of being admitted into christian society. Philpot, however, disbelieving the other mystery, that of transubstantiation ; was himself condemned to the flames ; and burned at Smithfield. Vid. Hume's Hist. Eng.

Protestant divines claim no miraculous power over bread and wine. Yet some of them still call these elements



“Holy Mysteries:” and make the sacraments nearly as incomprehensible as the catholics. Any absurdity can be called a mystery. Human ignorance is associated with a credulity which can “swallow a camel, or be choked by a gnat.”

In the scriptures, Mystery (in almost all passages) means something not revealed: something kept hid in God. And that something is a mystery so long only as it remains unrevealed. Revealing it, is making it known. Thus Paul informs the Romans that Gentiles may be saved by the gospel as well as Jews: “agreeably to the *revelation* of the mystery which *was kept secret* since the world began: but *now* is made manifest: and by the scriptures *made known* to all nations.”—Rom. xvi. 25. And to the Ephesians he says, “*By revelation*, God made *known* unto me the mystery, which in other ages was *not made known* unto the sons of men, as it is *now revealed*; that the Gentiles should be partakers of his promise in Christ.”—Eph. iii. 3. It being now revealed that Gentiles can be saved, there is no difficulty in understanding it.

If mystery mean something in itself utterly unknowable, because transcending the line of all human comprehension; it cannot be revealed to us: for it is incommunicable to beings with our faculties. Should some of us claim supernatural powers of discernment; and pretend that we have glimpses of things altogether beyond mortal ken; as did the shaking quakers at first; we ought, as they did, to express ourselves in inarticulate noises: not in articulate sounds. Others cannot understand us. Why use language which pretends to significance, to express what is utterly unknowable and inexpressible?

If a truth be unknown after its (alleged) revelation; the revelation is fictitious; for it has failed to make it known.

Mysteries, in the bible sense, are "The secret things which belong unto the Lord our God." And "those things which are revealed (made known by revelation) belong unto us and to our children forever."—Deut. xxix. 29. These we can understand.

Revelation and Mystery have the same relation, as Discovery and Secret. The secret when discovered, is a secret no longer. The mystery when revealed, is a mystery no longer.

Dr. Campbell has set this matter in so plain a light in his Dissertations, that preachers are inexcusable if they permit themselves to be uninformed as to the scriptural use of the word Mystery : and also if they contribute to keep their hearers ignorant of its meaning : and also if they do not mark the variation in the meaning of words *generally*, which a long tract of time insensibly produces.

How faulty then, if they tell their hearers that the doctrine of the trinity is clearly revealed ; and that it is nevertheless a profound mystery ? This is like saying, The clear sun now shines brilliantly in the zenith ; and profound darkness nevertheless shrouds us, because the sun is directly under our feet. Such a mystery renders revelation nugatory, and reason mute.

They who maintain that a *revealed* truth is a *mystery*, and as unknown as it was before revealed ; make this objection to what has now been stated. "There are truths in theology and in every science, which though well known to be truths, have relations with other truths on all sides which are wholly unknown. Must we not believe in the existence of things which are well known, because they have relations and modes of which we know nothing ? Must we not believe that soul and body exist, because we

cannot know how they are united? Must we not believe that grass grows, because we cannot tell *how*?"

Analyze this objection. "There are truths in theology and in every science, well known to be truths." Thus far then; we have knowledge and belief. We ourselves conceive these truths clearly. We know what they are, and can make others understand them. So far there is no mystery. We neither grope in the dark; nor ask others to grope along in the dark after us.

"But these intelligible truths have unknown relations with other truths on all sides which are unknowable."

Then we have nothing to believe about these mysterious relations and unknowable truths. It would be both absurd and impious to pretend to believe any thing concerning them. They "belong unto the Lord our God;" and not "unto us or to our children."

I understand that when my mind wills that my hand shall rise or fall; it rises or falls. I know what I mean. I make the reader understand me. Here is no mystery.

But of the *manner* in which my mind acts on my hand, I know nothing at all: Have I then any thing to believe about *the manner*, or *the how*? Nothing: except that it is unknowable. And if I do believe any thing about this mystery; I believe in the dark. And if I make an Article of faith about it; still, I cannot explain the Article to another. And if I anathematize him because he will not believe it; I as really impose upon him, as Philpot imposed on the Unitarian, when he spit in his face. And if I burn him as an heretic; I am a murderer; as were they who burned Philpot.

I see the grass grow. I know what I mean. I convey my meaning to others. Here is no mystery. Am I asked *how* it grows? and what are its relations with all the sur-



rounding elements ? I do not know. These are mysteries. They are among the secret things which do not yet belong to us, but to the Lord our God.

After all, the objection is gratuitous. When I am told, there are Three Persons in one essence ; I never ask *how* they exist ? or what *unknowable* relations they have with other unknown persons or things. I ask only who or what the three *revealed* persons are ? and what is the evidence that their number is three ? and that they exist ? I ask, what is the *fact* ? not the *how* ? If any man know, he can tell me : just as he tells me, volition of mind raises a hand of flesh and bones : or as he makes me see that grass grows. If he does not know, and talks without ideas ; why does he demand that I should believe ? If he has any meaning ; he can impart that meaning : unless indeed my understanding is inferior to his. If he will tell me what is meant by the proposition, “ There are three equal persons in one essence ; ” and will furnish me with evidence of its truth : I will be docile, and will learn, and be thankful. If the truth he presents to me be very great, and my understanding very shallow ; so that I cannot seize the truth which he presents : he will see and pity my weakness, and treat me kindly : and I will still be thankful.

If I think that in mathematical solutions, my intellect is such that I can keep along with him ; and I yet cannot at all understand what he says of his three persons in one essence ; I shall conclude that he is mistaken in thinking that *he* knows what that is, which he says he believes. And if he proceed to anathematize me, because I do not assent to that of which I perceive that he himself knows nothing at all : I then determine to resist, as well as I can, the temptation into which he leads me, to hold him in contempt. For I utterly condemn myself, when I feel the

least contempt for any one of my fellow servants. And I desire to be sincere, while I pray, "Lord, lay not this sin to their charge."

Christ informed a pharisee that "except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." The meaning is intelligible, and is no mystery. But the pharisee asked him, "How?" Christ informed him that the manner was not revealed. It was a mystery. The pharisee had nothing to do with the mode. "'The wind bloweth.'" You know this. You feel it. "Thou hearest the sound." So far there is no mystery. But "whence it cometh, or whither it goeth, thou canst not tell." Christ prescribed no Article of faith to his hearer on any part of the subject which was a mystery.

And Solomon had long before taught the folly of looking to mysteries for rules of action. "He that observeth the wind shall not sow : and he that regardeth the clouds shall not reap. As thou knowest not what is the way of the spirit (wind,) nor how the bones do grow in the womb of her that is with child ; even so thou knowest not the works of God who maketh all." In contradistinction from the folly of lanching out among mysteries, or making calculations from things unknowable, he subjoins : "In the morning sow thy seed ; and in the evening withhold not thine hand : for thou knowest not which shall prosper ; or whether both shall be alike good."—Eccl. xi. 4. Leave *mysteries* with him to whom they belong. Learn and do his *revealed* will. Whatever he commands us to do is *practicable*. Whatever he commands us to believe, is *intelligible*.

He who would officiously intermeddle with that which is known to be a mystery ; and he who would search out the Almighty unto perfection ; is the same character. None but a rebel worm would presume upon either.

Let us not bewilder ourselves with mysteries ; and think, like the heathens, that the gospel is to operate upon our souls by charm or enchantment. It is time this magical spell was broken. If the living God remove our selfishness, and our blindness ; we shall read, understand, and practice his *revealed* will. If he hath *revealed* Trinity of equal persons ; we shall understand this. For it is now no mystery. If he hath revealed *something* about the trinity ; that *something* may be learned and understood ; and is no mystery. If it have unknowable modes and mysterious relations with other unknowable persons and things ; with these we can have nothing to do.

Let those who say they have a revelation of Three Persons in One essence, set them forth in clear light before the minds of other men. As yet, so far as I know, this has not been done. For myself, I say with Professor Stewart, " My mind is absolutely unable to elicit any *ideas* from any of the definitions of person in the Godhead which I have ever examined." [Appendix O.]



## ORIGIN

## OF THE

## MYSTERY OF THE TRINITY.

FAR back in pagan antiquity ; men “ not retaining God in their knowledge,” and “ vain in their own imaginations,” deified visible objects, and invisible phantasms.

The apostles preached to heathens who thought that magical words, and magical numbers could put in action unseen powers. They conversed with men and women, who believed that Jupiter’s thunderbolt had three forks : that Neptune’s trident had three prongs : that Cerberus (the infernal dog who guarded the shades below) had three heads : that the Pythian Priestess uttered predictions, mounted on a stool of three legs.

The Goddess Diana, in *heaven*, was called Phœbe ; on *earth*, Diana ; *below* the earth, Hecate. She was called triceps, three headed. She had the head of a horse, of a dog, and of a virgin. Three in one : somewhat like three Gods in one person ; or, which is the same, three persons in one God. Apollo was the God of physic, of divination, and of poetry. He was called Sol in *heaven*, Bacchus on *earth*, and Apollo *below* the earth.

The apostles taught their converts to explode such mysteries : and to worship the Holy One. We have an example in Acts xiv.\*

Barnabas and Paul preached at Lystra : and on account of the miraculous cure of a cripple, the hearers thought

the apostles were Gods come down. Barnabas they took to be Jupiter. Jupiter was the supreme God of the heathen ; though he had a Father, viz : Saturn : as most trinitarians say that Christ's Divinity has a Father. Paul, they supposed to be Mercurius. The God Mercurius was Son of Jupiter by his wife Maia.

"Then the priest of Jupiter, who was before their city, brought oxen and garlands, and would have done sacrifice with the people. Which when Barnabas and Paul heard, they rent their clothes, and ran in among the people, crying out, Sirs, why do ye these things? We also are men of like passions with you, and preach unto you, that you should turn from these vanities unto the living God, who made heaven and earth and all things : who left not himself without witness, in that he did good, and gave us rain and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness. And with these sayings, scarce restrained they the people, that they had not done sacrifice unto them."

The first christians had seen Jesus, and conversed with apostles. God was with them indeed. Their heavenly spirit was transmitted through several generations. Hence the wide spread of the gospel amidst trying persecutions. Pagan Gods and pagan rites gave way. The glory of Jehovah was revealed ; and the victorious reign of his anointed Son diffused peace, humility, and joy ; such as suffering humanity had not before witnessed. With manuscript copies of the bible ; we are not to regard them as learned expositors. But they were unincumbered with human creeds.

The mystery of three persons in the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ was quite unknown to them. Several centuries run out before this article gained an establishment.

Previous to Constantine and his council at Nice, (anno 325;) preachers, superficially instructed, began to be bewildered in adjusting the meaning of the words The Father, the Son, and The Holy Ghost. What the words intended, they did not exactly know: and they fell into disputes and unintelligible jargon. From this obscurity, emerged the mystery of the trinity, and its first rude draughts, among christians.

“Tertullian (anno 200) was the earliest father who presents us with the terms *person* and *trinity*.”—Stewart, p. 26. These terms were used vaguely, and multiplied disputes. Praxeas thought the words Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, were all applied to God; and must therefore have the same meaning. This was a mistake. Tertullian attempted to correct it. But neither did he know the sense of the words as used in various passages. His zeal against Praxeas, led him to expound them thus: “All (i. e. Father, Son; and Holy Ghost) are *not* one: while all are of one; that is, by a unity of substance. Still the mysterious economy which distributes unity into trinity is observed: marking out Father, Son, and Ghost. There are three: not in condition, but rank: not in essence, by form: not in power, but kind: of one substance, one condition, one power. For there is One God, from whom, all these ranks and forms and kinds, by the names of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, are reckoned.”

“The third is the Spirit from God and the Son: as the fruit from the stalk is the third from the root; a stream from the river from the fountain; a sharp point from a ray from the sun. So trinity proceeds by interlinked and connected grades from the Father.” One of our partly civilized Indian sachems, being employed to settle the meaning of Father, Son and Ghost; might elaborate a creed much like this.



At first, the fathers in general strongly objected to *persons*. They thought this language implied (unaided by duplicity of signification, absurdity, and mystery, it did and does imply) that there are three beings in God : which they said was unscriptural. Thus Dionysius Romanus, fifty years after Turtullian (anno 250,) reprobates those who separate the divine unity into three different persons. They preach, says he, as if there were three Gods ; dividing the sacred unity into three Hypostases or persons.—Stewart, p. 24.

In this century, arose Sabellius and his followers ; who, to avoid absurdities now afloat, and which they could not digest ; maintained that a certain portion only of the divine nature was united to the man Jesus the Son of God : and that the Holy Ghost was a portion of the Father.—View of Religions, p. 247.

Some of the ante-nicene fathers began to think there were persons : and that the Father and Son were *ομοουσιος* consubstantial. But the council of Antioch (anno 273) rejected consubstantial.

The famous council of Nice (anno 325) with the emperor at their head, adopted *ομοουσιος*, as a proper word to express the “incomprehensible manner” of the Son’s procreation in his Father’s substance. The meaning of parts of the Nicene creed is as occult as the mystical rant of a necromancer. I have heard a catholic priest read it to his illiterate congregation in Latin. They devoutly kneeled. And it was as intelligible to them in Latin, as it is to any body else, in English.

Arius, presbyter of Alexandria, a man of genius and eloquence, in the fourth century, maintained that the Son was “the beginning of the creation of God :” but appears not to have understood the senses in which the words Holy

Ghost are used in the scriptures. He is said to have taught that the Holy Ghost was created by the Son.

Athanasius bishop of Alexandria employed his talents forty six years against the Arians. The creed which bears his name, although probably composed about 200 years after his day, is as follows :

“Whoever would be saved, must above all things, possess the catholic faith : which, unless he keep whole and inviolate ; he shall perish everlastingly, and that without doubt. The catholic faith is this. We worship One God in Trinity, and Trinity in Unity : neither confounding the persons, nor separating the substance. For there is one person of the Father, another of the Son, and another of the Holy Spirit. But the Divinity of the Father, and Son, and Holy Spirit is one ; the glory equal ; the majesty co-eternal. The Father is uncreated ; the Son uncreated ; the Holy Spirit uncreated. The Father is infinite, the Son infinite, the Holy Spirit infinite. The Father is eternal, the Son eternal, the Holy Spirit eternal. Nevertheless there are not three eternals, but one eternal. There are not three uncreateds, nor three infinities ; but one uncreated, one infinite. The Father is not created nor begotten. The Son is from the Father alone ; not created, but begotten. The Holy Spirit is from the Father and Son ; not created, nor begotten, but proceeding.”

The writer of this creed may have been in truth, what the catholic church calls him, a “saint ;” “Saint Athanasius.” Still the creed discovers the infirmities both of his understanding, and heart. Of his understanding : for the creed itself is gibberish. Of his heart : for when he presumed to deal damnation on those who could not reverence the image which he had set up ; his humility and benevo-

lence had given place to a lofty arrogance. Watts expressed the opinion that he should better please his Lord by meekness ; than by pretending with assumed authority to “ guard God’s sacred truths, by scattering all the terrors of hell around them.”

The Nicene creed was sanctioned, with some additions, by the second general council at Constantinople, anno 381. One hundred and fifty bishops of this council, being the majority, and consequently the orthodox party, aimed by this to put down what their arrogance called “ the pest” and “ the blasphemy” of the minority ; and to give uniformity to the faith of the people who were unable to judge for themselves.

These creeds passed down through successive councils in the church of Rome. Their utter unintelligibility rendered them convenient in that church, whose hierarchy profited by the submission of the people to mysteries. Their triple Divinity and Virgin and saints and images ; their miracles and purgatory and mysteries ; much resemble the ancient mythology of pagan Rome.

In that church was also made the scholastic scheme of trinity ; our present orthodoxy : “ a set of words, as Watts observes, invented by subtle and metaphysical schoolmen ; and never intended to convey intelligible meaning to the minds of christians.”

When Henry the Eighth revolted from the Pope, and made the clergy and people of England profess that he, instead of the Roman Pontiff, was head of the church of England ; it became necessary to new-model their Liturgy. His convocation of clergy, himself being Pontifex Maximus, decided for our fathers, what should hereafter be the Rule of Faith : viz. The old and new testament with the Apocrypha, the Apostolic, the Nicene, and the Athanasian creeds.



Can we realise that such was the condition of our fathers? such their religion? such their degradation, 297 years ago? Previous to this, they were papists; and their religion consisted almost entirely of mysteries. And so profound was their ignorance, that to mysteries imposed upon them by their priests, they yielded a sincere and indolent submission. [Appendix P.]

Our forefathers neither claimed the power, nor so much as felt a desire to examine any matter and judge for themselves. They were sunk down under a spiritual despotism. Protestants have yet retained a remnant of those mysteries: and so far, the people still yield an uninquisitive and reverential acquiescence.

Henry and his clergy admitted auricular confession, and penance, and transubstantiation, as when under the Pope. Praying to saints was admitted as expedient; but less rigidly enforced. They continued the former rites of the church, the use of holy water, the observance of Ash Wednesday, Palm Sunday, Good Friday, &c.: but with some diminished sacredness.

The members of the convocation were divided on the question of retaining purgatory. They therefore took a middle course, and ordained as follows: "Since according to due order of charity, and the book of Maccabees, it is a good and charitable deed to pray for souls departed; and since such a practice has been maintained from the beginning; all bishops and teachers should instruct the people not to be grieved for the continuance of the same. But since the place where departed souls are retained before they reach paradise, as well as the nature of their pains, is left uncertain; it is meet and convenient to commend the deceased to the mercy of God, trusting that he accepteth our prayers for them."—Hume's Hist. Eng.

What our fathers were 300 years ago, we may learn by looking at Spain at the present time. The profits of mysteries may be estimated from the following schedule, posted up on the churches of Madrid, three or four years ago, for the edification of the catholics of that capital :

“ The sacred and royal Bank of Piety, has relieved from Purgatory from 1721 to Nov. 1826,

1,030,395 souls, at an expense of.....£1,720,437

11,420 do. from Nov. 1826 to Nov. 1827,..... 14,276”

[New York Observer, May 25, 1833.]

This is, one million, forty one thousand, eight hundred and fifteen souls relieved from purgatory ; for one million, seven hundred and thirty four thousand, seven hundred and thirteen pounds. This gives the priest £1 13s. 4d. for each soul delivered from purgatory, by his mysterious mass. A more profitable mystery has not been imposed on human ignorance. [Appendix Q.]

When popery was discontinued in England, our ancestors were exceedingly distressed for the souls of their departed friends ; which they believed must now lie, during many ages, in torments for want of masses to relieve them. This great revolution from popery to protestantism was effected by the king, merely because the Pope would not give him a bill of divorce from his queen, that he might marry Anne Boleyn. It is noticeable that the priests from interest, and the people from ignorance, followed the varying religion of the sovereigns ; while the sovereigns controlled the livings. When queen Mary, Henry's daughter, took the sceptre, and ordered the clergy back to popery ; they took the people and went back. When her sister queen Elizabeth succeeded her, and ordered them again to be protestants ; they were again protestants : she being *Sacerdos Maxima*, Head of the church.

It will be seen that the trinity was by Henry most thoroughly brought down into the English protestant church : the ancient creeds, called Apostolic, Nicene, and Athanasian, being ranked with the bible as the Rule of Faith. Whoever denied them, was doomed to the stake or scaffold.

What is called the Apostles' creed, has meaning. The Nicene, and Athanasian, as well as Turtullian's, would require a magician to elicit intelligible sense. Many schemes of trinity have been made since those days : several, since my remembrance. And to profess faith in any one of them, if only it be so worded as to be inexplicably unintelligible ; secures the character of any man or minister, as sound and orthodox.

Notwithstanding all this, I know that I have a right and am bound to pass by them all, and go directly to the bible. I examine for myself what I ought to believe as to the meaning of the words Father, and Son, and Holy Ghost, in each passage where these words occur. If any man would restrict me in this right ; he would divest me of my money, and every other interest ; if the state of society was such that he could cloke his injustice under mysterious disguises ; so as to render his avarice sacred to the apprehensions of the multitude.

“ This I confess, that after the way which they call heresy, so worship I the God of my fathers, believing all things which are written in the law and in the prophets : ” — Acts, xxiv. 14 : but not all things written in the creeds delivered down by Henry from the church of Rome. And I apprehend that whoever will take this course with an humble and prayerful mind, will find the bible more instructive and intelligible than he had apprehended. But let him count the cost.



"If, says Watts, we labor in our zeal to proselyte the Learned; most of them are so rooted in their old opinions, so immovably established in their particular forms, so self satisfied, so prejudiced against further light; that we shall probably awaken their learned anger to fix the brand of heresy upon us; and overwhelm any brighter discoveries with clamor and hard names, and extinguish them in noise and darkness."

"If we are solicitous to persuade the Unlearned into any better explanation than they learned in their younger years; we have the same huge prejudices to encounter. Hard names and reproaches are weapons ever at hand; and common both to the Greek and barbarian. The vulgar christian is as expert at them as the scholar."

The times are milder than they were. Henry VIII. died 286 years ago, having reigned over our forefathers 38 years nearly. "Besides executing 72,000 of his subjects for other causes; his religious murders amounted on an average to six a day, Sundays included, during his whole reign."—Dick's Phil. of Rel. Such a phenomenon could not consist with the present diffusion of knowledge; and consequent humanity. This is one illustration of Solomon's proverb: "That the soul be without knowledge, it is not good."

As far as consistent with a clear exhibition of the nature, origin, and continuance of that blinding mystery which I explode; I have aimed to give no offence to Jew, or to Greek, or to the church of God. My views of the unity and character of God; and of the pre-existence and character of his Son Jesus whom he hath made both Lord and Christ; are, in my full conviction, clearly revealed in my creed The Holy Scriptures. If I have ever unjustly encroached upon the freedom of those who dissent from these views, I am not

aware of it. So far as I know, I am not accused of it. If I am thought to have done so in any part of this publication; candor, I hope, will make some apology, when reminded that very forbidding airs and menacing attitudes have occasionally been assumed toward me. My aim has been to be understood: and to exhibit facts and truths stripped of disguise: facts and truths in which, I solemnly believe, the christian world has a deep interest.

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### QUESTION.

“JESUS asked the pharisees, saying, What think ye of The Christ? Whose Son is he?” i. e. Whose Son do you suppose your Messiah is, as you collect from your prophets?

“They say unto him, The Son of David. He saith unto them, How then doth David call him Lord, saying, The LORD (Jehovah) said unto my Lord (Adonai,) Sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool? If David call him Lord, How is he his Son?”

The question is no equivocation. The identical person, (whether a created or uncreated person,) who was David's Lord, was David's Son. The pharisees could not solve the difficulty.

Trinitarians answer. God The Father the first person in the essence, said to God The Son the second person in the essence, “Sit thou on my right hand.” This Son, equal with the Father, was the person who created and governs the world: and by his own consent was appointed by his Father as the Redeemer of men, and Governor of Israel: and so was Lord to king David. And though he thought

it not robbery to be equal with his Father ; yet, by a mysterious economy, he consented to take the form of a servant ; and depend on the promised aid of his Father in subduing his enemies. Jehovah the Son, David's LORD, was also David's Son, as he was in the fullness of time begotten by the Holy Ghost proceeding from the Father and the Son, in the virgin who was a descendant of David. Thus God the Son, was David's Son.

All this was familiar to me from my childhood. Yet I cannot believe it. • What is said of The Son in all the scriptures, expresses derivation and dependence. “ ‘This day’ doth not mean from all eternity. If the Father must support him, and subdue his enemies under him : then he truly said, “ The Father is greater than I.” He is the Man Christ Jesus. As Son, his essence and perfections are not identical with the essence and perfections of The LORD, by whom he was begotten : and by whom he was addressed. For if the essence and perfections of the LORD, and the essence and perfections of his begotten Son are identical ; then in Ps. ii. The LORD is talking to himself, and calling himself his “ Son” and “ king” and “ anointed :” and directing himself to ask of himself the heathen for an inheritance ; and promising himself that if he will so ask, he will give himself the uttermost parts of the earth for his possession. This is not analogous to any well signifying language among men. If an earthly king should so talk to himself, we should think him a very indifferent man.

When David says, “ O give thanks unto The LORD of Lords ;” he surely understood that LORD, and Lords were not equals. We know that Lord does not denote God Supreme in the following passage : “ Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.”—Eph. i. 3. If in this text, Lord means the Divinity of Christ who is God Su-



preme ; then God Supreme has both a God and Father. He has neither.

How then is this question to be answered ?

Thus. "The LORD" is, in Hebrew, Jehovah ; and is God Supreme. He is the speaker.

"The Son" to whom he speaks is, in Hebrew, Adonai Lord. Lord is sometimes used in scripture, where no more respect is intended than when we say, Sir. It is used for persons of worth and merit : Gen. xxiv. 8. For prophets : I. Kings, xviii. 7. For a master : John, xv. 15. For a husband : Gen. xviii. 12. For tyrants : Isa. xxvi. 13. I. Pet. v. 3. For princes and nobles : Dan. iv. 36. For kings : Gen. xl. 1. II. Sam. xix. 19. For The Son of God : Ps. cx. 1. And for God himself.

He to whom Jehovah says, "This day have I begotten thee," was the pre-existent soul of Christ, called "the first begotten Son," and "the beginning of the creation of God." This explains the doctrine of the most primitive christians concerning the ante-mundane generation of Christ : and also accords with the bible account of his pre-existence, and "the glory which he had with the Father before the world was."

The things attributed to the unbegotten God and his begotten Son ; sending and being sent ; giving and receiving ; and mutually loving : all have their foundation in the united Divine and Human natures. Persons, personalities, personal differences, and personal distinctions in the very Divinity, essential to his being, and eternally inherent in him ; are all needless here.

The Son was "the Lord from Heaven." He "came forth from the Father : " assumed "the body that was prepared for him : " and sustained the offices to which he was anointed. Hence the priesthood and kingdom of The Mes-

siah ; and the perfect satisfaction he offered to God for the offences of men. Of old was the order given to him, " Sit on my right hand, till I make thy foes thy footstool." Of old he was " Archangel : " Prince of the kings of the earth : and David's Adonai Lord.

He was David's Son : born of the virgin who was a descendant of David. Hence God Supreme was not " Son of David : " was not " Son of man : " was not " the seed of the woman." " The first born of every creature " was both Son of David, and Lord of David : and was " Son of God," and the " seed of the woman."

The doctrine of a begotten God in the Godhead, equal to the Father, and equally ancient, and equally the Godhead itself, sent down from heaven, born of Mary, crucified under Pilate, is orthodox ; is untaught in the bible ; is an impossibility. A reason in Latin was given for believing it by ancient scholastic doctors. It was this : " Credo, quia impossibile est." The meaning is, " I believe it, because it is impossible." They knew it was an impossibility. But calling it " a mystery," they could believe it as easily as they could believe that Christ, in his last supper, swallowed and ate himself : and as men believe that three equal persons inhere in one essence.

Equally useless are these mysteries, in explaining the forms of blessing to which appeals are made. As II. Cor. xiii. 14—" The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all."

We need grace from the Messiah, the Son, the Mediator. " The word was made flesh and dwelt among us, full of grace."—John, i. 14. We have kindred with his humanity : and have part in his sufferings, his spirit and his

joys. "He is touched with a feeling of our infirmities."  
"He ever liveth to make intercession for us."

We enjoy through him the forgiving love of God.

That we sinners may rejoice in this salvation, God who is Holy and Ghost spiritually assimilates us to himself. With this Holy Ghost or Spirit, even the One God, we have union and communion. "That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they all may be one in us; that the world may believe that thou hast sent me."

The world will "believe that thou hast sent me;" so soon as they see all professed christians united in disinterested love. That happy period, however, hath no connection with a triplex Divinity. Had the rude Turtullian or Athanasius maintained ten or twelve persons; he might have appealed to a form of blessing, and have rendered his creed orthodox. As Rev. i. 4—"Grace be unto you, and peace from him which is, and from him which was, and from him which is to come, and from the seven spirits which are before the throne, and from Jesus Christ the faithful witness, the first begotten from the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth." They, however, restricted the number to three. And to prevent all further doubt; some of the catholic saints placed the mystic three in the bible. "But from the beginning it was not so."  
[Appendix D.]



## BAPTISM.

CAN we ascertain the meaning of the terms, The Father, and The Son, and The Holy Ghost, in which we are baptised?

Accustomed from infancy to Three equal Persons in God: and the creeds using the words Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, as names of these identical Persons: the association of ideas in our minds, suggests them when baptism is mentioned. But as no such persons occur in the bible, we may waive them for the present; as we would take nothing for granted. We may go on surer ground by taking up the twenty eighth chapter of Matthew, where the words Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, first occur in connection with baptism.

We have here account of the resurrection of Jesus Christ. The two Marys went early to the sepulchre. They saw an angel, who said, "Ye seek Jesus who was crucified. He is not here. Come see the place where the Lord lay. And go quickly and tell his disciples, He is risen and goeth before you into Galilee: there ye shall see him. Then the eleven went into Galilee; and when they saw him, they worshipped him: but some doubted."

"And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All Power is given unto me, in heaven and earth. Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations; baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."

What being is here intended by the Father?

It is obvious that The Father is here correlative to him who is joined with him in the passage as the Son. Hence

it is the same being who is so often called The Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. It therefore cannot be doubted that The Father means the same being who speaks in Ps. 2 and 110, called Jehovah. 'The LORD (Jehovah) hath said unto me, Thou art my Son: this day have I begotten thee. Ask of me, and I will give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth ('all nations') for thy possession. The LORD hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou art a priest forever after the order of Melchisedec. The LORD at thy right hand shall strike through kings in the day of his wrath.' This must be the invisible God. 'To us there is but One God, even the Father.'

Who then is The Son intended in this passage?

Doubtless the same to whom The LORD declared, 'Thou art my Son: to-day have I begotten thee.' And this was the same Jesus of whose resurrection from the dead, we have account in this twenty eighth chapter of Matthew. 'The disciples worshipped him whom *they saw*.'—ver. 17. The angel who said, 'See the place where the *Lord lay*;' could not have meant that The LORD (Jehovah) had 'lain' dead 'in that place.' Nor could they have said of him, 'He is not here.'—ver. 6.

Verse 19.—'All power is GIVEN unto me in heaven and earth. Go ye THEREFORE, and teach all nations: baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son.'

This teaches that 'all power in heaven and in earth,' was not originally inherent in the Son. For then it could not be *given* him. Moreover, the appellation Son is inapplicable to the unbegotten God. God Supreme is Son to no God. But 'all power in heaven and in earth being given' to the Son; the Son had authority to make 'all nations' his disciples; and to order them to be baptized in

his name. 'He hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than that of angel,' (messenger,) viz: 'The Son:' a name more excellent than that of Moses, (servant,) unto whom the Israelites 'were all baptized in the cloud and in the sea:' a 'name to which every knee shall bow.' 'The Son' then is he who 'was dead, and is alive.'

'The God of our Lord Jesus Christ, The Father of glory, by the exceeding greatness of his power, wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might; and dominion, and EVERY NAME that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come; and hath put all things under his feet: and gave him to be head over all things to the church.'—Eph. i. 17, and on. In his name we are baptized.

Human wisdom has objected that all this authority is insufficient: that baptism cannot be administered in the name of this Son, because he suffered and died; because he was capable of humiliation and exaltation: and because he is a Son who hath no 'power in heaven and in earth' except that which 'is given him.'

We answer: the objector is at issue with Christ himself. For, 'all power being given to him,' is the very reason he has set forth why this baptism shall be administered. This objection can obtain no weight from the fact<sup>s</sup> (if it be a fact,) that there are three equal persons in God. For to neither of these, could 'all power in heaven and in earth' be given. For they are all equal in 'power and glory.' They are incapable of receiving 'power,' or any thing else, as a gift.

Nor can the objection gain any strength from the fact, (if it be a fact,) that there are two Sons of God combined;



the one infinite, and the other finite. The first is begotten in the essence of the Father, and is equal to the Father ; and equally independent, and incapable of receiving gifts. The other is created ; is the man begotten in the virgin. The created Son is not equal to the Father. For ‘ he increased in stature and in wisdom,’ and ‘ could of himself do nothing.’ ‘ Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered : and being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him.’—Heb. v. 8, 9. This was the Son to whom ‘ all power in heaven and in earth was given.’

Had it pleased infinite wisdom to have issued a commission to baptize in the name of the first of these Sons, who is one in essence with the Father, and to whom no ‘ power in heaven and earth is given ;’ this might better have accorded with our sense of propriety. But the fact, as stated in this chapter, is quite otherwise. The Son respected in this commission to baptize, is the Son who had been crucified and hung on a tree : and whose sonship was now declared by his resurrection. He had long been the Son of God : his first begotten Son : his ‘ only begotten Son’ in heaven : and now ‘ declared (determined in the Greek) to be the Son of God, with power, by his resurrection from the dead.’—Rom. i. 4.

The disciples had been members of his family. They knew him as The Son announced by Gabriel, who said to Mary ; ‘ Behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a Son, and shalt call his name Jesus. He shall be Great : and shall be called The Son of the Highest. And the Lord God *shall give* unto him the throne of his father David. And he shall reign over the house of Jacob forever : and of his kingdom there shall be no end.’

‘ Then Mary said, How shall this be, seeing I know not a man ? And the angel answered, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee ; and the Power of the Highest shall overshadow thee. Therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called The Son of God.’—Luke i.

We cannot believe that Jehovah the second person in the trinity was in the womb of the virgin, so as to be brought forth as her Son : or, that Mary was, as the catholics say, ‘ The Mother of God.’ God Supreme is not a ‘ thing :’ ‘ that holy thing which shall be born of thee, and called The Son of God.’ [Appendix Q.]

The Son of the Highest, born of Mary, is the man Jesus united to God, and infinitely inferior to God dwelling in him. Yet through him as a most suitable mirror, are displayed the divine perfections in their fairest and strongest light. ‘ He is the image of the invisible God,’ and the fit instrument by which God acts in the redemption of the church, and in the government and judgment of the world. With ‘ all power in heaven and in earth given to him,’ he has ‘ gone forth conquering and to conquer :’ and ‘ must reign till he hath put all enemies under his feet. Then shall the Son also be subject unto him that did put all things under him, that God may be all in all.’—I. Cor. xv.

He instructed his disciples in the days of his humiliation : but gradually. And they received his instructions still more gradually. They never learned his Divinity till after his resurrection. They believed he was the long expected Messiah, i. e. The Christ, i. e. The Anointed, i. e. the priest, prophet, and mighty king, whom God had appointed to bring salvation. ‘ We believe and are sure that thou art The Christ.’—John, vi. 69. They believed that he had a peculiar and glorious relation to God ; that he was his Son, referring to the dignity of his person and of-

fice as the appointed Savior. Thus Nathaniel said, 'Rabbi, Thou art the Son of God : thou art the king of Israel.'—John, i. 49. This was Peter's confession : 'Thou art The Christ, The Son of the living God.'—Matt. xvi. 16. They believed that he had an existence before he came into the world. 'We believe that thou camest forth from God.'—John, xvi. 30. They had heard him say, 'I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world : again, I leave the world, and go to the Father.'—ver. 28. This they understood literally. For they say, 'Now thou speakest plainly ; and speakest no parable : ' no figure or metaphor.

Jesus himself testifies to their belief of these two articles, viz : his pre-existence ; and his mission. 'They have known surely that I came out from thee : and they have believed that thou didst send me.'—John, xvii. 8. From the stores of knowledge which he so rapidly acquired, they inferred his previous existence and correspondence with his Father in heaven. 'Now we are sure that thou knowest all things : by this we believe that thou camest forth from God.'—John, xvi. 30. 'All things,' that is, in a limited sense : as the woman of Tekoah said to David, II. Sam. xiv. For the utmost the disciples inferred from it was, 'By this we believe that thou camest forth from God : ' not that he was God. Christ had told them a very little before, that he, even 'The Son,' knew not the day when the Judgment would be.

They believed that 'Jesus of Nazareth was a prophet mighty in word and deed before God and all the people.'—Luke, xxiv. 19. But they wondered that the winds and seas obeyed him. They wondered that the fig tree withered.

When he spake of his death and resurrection, 'Peter took him, and began to rebuke him, saying, 'This shall



never be unto thee, Lord.'—Matt. xvi. 22. Peter had no thought that he was rebuking the invisible God : nor that Jesus whom he acknowledged as The Son of God, was God : or that he was united to God ; as the whole scriptures now completed, teach us that he is.

Mary and Martha 'believed him to be The Christ, The Son of God, which should come into the world.'—John, xi. 27. Yet neither of them profess the belief that he had power in himself to raise the dead. They say, 'If thou hadst been here, my brother had not died.' And, 'I know that even now, whatsoever thou wilt ask of God, God will give thee.'—John xi.

There were passages in the old testament which might have taught them, Deity and Humanity in the God of Israel : and the sorrows, and death, and rising again, of The Messiah. But we have the testimony of Christ himself, even after his resurrection, that they were 'fools and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets had spoken.' They labored under the power of mighty prejudices. And christians now, with their ampler means, know little of the personal character of The Son ; by reason of similar prejudices.

More is required of us, and even made essential to our salvation, than was required of them. Surely it was not an essential article for Peter, to believe in the sufferings and death of Christ as an expiation for sin ; at the time he rebuked him because he spake of dying.—Mark xvi. None of the apostles then knew 'What that rising from the dead should mean.'—Mark ix. But we must know that 'If Christ be not risen from the dead, then is our preaching vain : and we are yet in our sins.'—I. Cor. xv. The apostles were in a state of grace and salvation. But we are inexcusable if we remain ignorant of his Divinity ; of his

Humanity ; of his personal character ; of his character as Son ; as the Messiah or anointed king, priest, prophet, judge : his ancient glories, and abasement, and present exalted reign : and the honor and worship we are to present, with heaven's hosts, unto him as 'The Lamb of God which taketh away the sins of the world.'

My object is to show that The Son in whose name we are baptized, in view of the *inspired* writers, is not a Person intrinsic in the Godhead, equal in 'power' with certain other persons ; and to whom 'power' could not be 'given.' The Son is one to whom 'all power in heaven and earth is given : ' given as a reward of his meritorious sufferings : given to a Son, whose body was crucified, and whose soul descended into hades : a Son who was raised from the dead by the never dying God : a Son, who in his being and powers and offices, is derived and dependent : a Son 'in whom dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily.'

That such is Christ, as *The Son*, is evident from the language and conduct of Peter and other disciples. They had no apprehension that their Master was God, when they rebuked him ; when they questioned his knowledge in some things ; when they wondered at his miracles. And yet at that very time, they called him The Son of God. This was made necessary to their salvation, even then. And they professed roundly that he was The Son of God. This title therefore does not declare his Divinity ; or equality with the Father.

The Father is represented as willing to do nothing of himself ; i. e. without a Mediator ; in the government, and redemption, and judgment of men. He therefore doth all things by The Son as his agent, his minister, speaker, angel, Logos : himself maintaining his royal state. As Di-

vinity, he never lets down his sovereign majesty. Where Divinity is, there are all the prerogatives and uncompromising claims of God. He never assumes or sustains other or lower characters. The whole scheme of salvation is so constructed as to assert and maintain the authority, and supreme elevation of God ; while man is pardoned and saved. If we will not have salvation on these terms, we can have no portion in Christ. Every inferior character and office which belongs to Christ, belongs to him as Son, and Messiah : belongs to his created nature ; that nature in which he ‘increased in wisdom and stature ;’ and ‘could of himself do nothing.’ In this nature he could eat and drink and sleep and weep and die. As to his Divinity, he could suffer no diminution of majesty or splendor or blessedness : could receive no ‘power,’ no office, no gift ; in heaven, or on earth.

If the Father has a Son different from this, eternally begotten in his own essence, and equal to himself : he too can never for a moment waive his supremacy ; nor do the things ascribed to Jesus of Nazareth. Being God most High, he could not be the suffering, dying, rising Lamb of God. He could of himself do all things ; unless obstructed by his two co-equals in the Godhead. And this would be infinitely diverse from the claims every where set up in favor of all that is the independent God. It would also suppose God to be changeable, and weak, and void of dignity.

If salvation could not be brought to us without such degradation of Christ’s Divinity ; we had all perished in our sins. A theory (like the Nicene and other creeds) of a co-equal Son, of the essence of the Father and Holy Ghost ; sent down from heaven ; placed in the condition of a servant ; diminished to the dimensions of a man : subverts the



gospel. The gospel asserts the rights of all that is Divinity; maintains the claims of his law and justice, and preserves their sway and truth; while sinners are saved. Degradation of the Divinity that man may be saved, is the very thing the gospel professes to prevent. If there are ever so many equal persons in God; no one of them can divest himself of his vastness, or lower his station, or veil his glory for a moment, in our redemption. For our redemption, like God's other works, is expressly designed to maintain and illustrate that glory. A Son equal to the Father in power and glory, could not have walked about in Judea; and said, 'I came not to do my own will, but the will of him that sent me:' or, 'I speak not of myself: the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works.'—John xiv.

We now fully believe that Jesus Christ is God: and as fully that in an inferior nature, even in our own nature, he is The Son of God. His Divinity appears from his divine names and titles, and acts. But 'Son of God' is not one of those titles which discover it. Even the learned among the Jews who knew nothing of God himself in their Messiah, distinctly acknowledged that their Messiah was The Son of God. Thus the high priest, when Jesus was arraigned before their council, 'said unto him, I adjure thee by the living God, that thou tell us, whether thou be The Messiah, The Son of God.'—Matt. xxvi. 63.

The Son of God being raised from the dead, and 'by the right hand of God exalted;' extends his dominion over heaven and earth. And not the less because 'all power in heaven and earth is given him.' But *because* it 'is given him, therefore, says he, baptize in the name of the Father, and of the Son.'

Philip so practiced in the case of the eunuch. Having expounded the fifty third chapter of Isaiah, which foretold

the sufferings and meekness and resurrection and successful reign of God's anointed Son; he told the eunuch that he would immediately go down from the chariot and baptize him; if he believed what he had heard with all his heart. And the eunuch said, 'I believe that Jesus is the Son of God.' And Philip baptized him.

Philip required no belief of three persons in God. He had never heard of them. The apostolic churches had no such creed.

The bible being allowed an authoritative voice in this matter, I must believe with Professor Stewart, that 'the term Son of God, does not appropriately designate Christ as Divine: but as the incarnate mediator: as him whom the Father hath sanctified, and sent into the world. Did The Father sanctify, and send into the world, his Son as God, who is infinitely perfect and immutable?' Most certainly not. 'As Son, he filled and acted in a subordinate capacity. How then can his being Son, prove him Divine?'

So Watts says, 'The name Son, and Sons of God, is in the bible applied to men and angels, as well as to Christ. But it is never used in any one place to signify Godhead. We have before proved that this name cannot signify his co-essential, consubstantial Sonship. Therefore it cannot signify his Godhead.'

Baptism is then administered in the name of The Son, whose Sonship was declared by his resurrection from the dead: who had so humbled himself as to die with malefactors; and was now so 'exalted as to be a Prince and Savior:' who was so dependent as to receive gifts; and so exalted as to have 'all power in heaven and in earth given to him:' who is worshipped by the elders in heaven as 'The Lamb that was slain,' in conjunction with God on his eternal throne.

Mere man says, this is incredible. What ! Baptize in the name of a creature !

With the same wisdom and the same humility, mere man may say, it is incredible that a creature is united to his Maker : that God could 'make him both Lord and Christ' over us. Disregarding this wisdom and this humility, I enquire simply, What says the bible ? Marvellous as it is, the bible represents the Man Christ Jesus as associated with God : as sitting on his right hand ; and on his throne : and with the Father, moving almighty power : ruling over principalities in heaven : and judging the human race.

Dr. Dwight says, ' Nothing but impiety can, so far as I can see, be contained in a direction to baptize in the name of God and a Creature. What creature would dare associate himself with God in such an act of authority ; and thus presume to ascend the throne of his Maker ?'—p. 13. Had this been said by Voltaire, we should have thought it infidel philosophy. The Doctor must, at times, make *something* of the man Christ Jesus. Scripture is explicit in assuring us that the man Jesus did and does associate himself with God in such an act of authority ; and in far greater acts of authority. He did 'presume to ascend the throne of his Maker,' and 'sit on his right hand.' 'These things saith the beginning of the creation of God, and the first begotten from the dead : I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne.'—Rev. i. 5, and iii. 14, 21. Son is the Humanity : not the Divinity of Christ.

Who then is The Holy Ghost ?

'The Holy Ghost is God ; employed in his most benevolent and wonderful work ; that of restoring holiness to the soul of man : in his most glorious character ; that of the



Sanctifier : in a work demanding the supreme gratitude of mankind : in a character demanding their supreme reverence and love.'—Dr. Dwight.

So the words Holy Ghost are used in sundry passages ; and such is their import in the form of baptism. God by his resistless influence, is the efficient agent on whom the whole success of the gospel depends. ' Paul will plant, and Apollos water' in vain ; unless ' God give the increase.' —I. Cor. iii. 6. The Holy Ghost is God, giving increase.

By the coming of the first begotten Son from heaven ; and suffering in the body fitted for him ; as ' it is written in the volume of the book : ' all the preliminary steps have been taken for restoring God's chosen people. The Son from the beginning had security of success in his mediatorial reign. Not the success which might be reasonably expected from the submission, love, and joy of all men spontaneously hailing him as their Lord ; so soon as he appeared among them. He knew before he came, that men would not ' reverence the Son.' And we know that love did not kindle in every heart as soon as they saw him. So totally selfish and rebellious were they, that they rose and killed him.

Mediating between the Omnipotent Majesty and us, he cast all the blame of our apostacy on us : testified that our deeds are evil : that his Father and his law and his government are good : and that our damnation is just. He taught the ruling powers, the scribes, and priests, that they were God's rebels, and deserved hell ; notwithstanding their hypocritical disguises. And they abhorred him. They attempted to appropriate his vineyard and rights, and all the government of heaven and earth, to themselves. They and all the world practically allowed no interest to exist, but the interest of monopolizing self. ' We will not have this man to reign over us.'—Luke, xix. 14.

Had the world been left thus, all would have been lost. The Lamb of God would have been slain in vain. Grace therefore has further displays.

The God of glory, promised his Son before the Son left his bosom, that he would uphold him in his work: that he would raise his body from the grave; and bring his soul from hades: that 'the pleasure of the LORD should prosper in his hand:' that 'the crown should flourish on his (the Son's) head:' that 'he should see the travail of his soul till he was satisfied.' The Father assured him that by his power and grace, he would create anew as many as the Son desired: that the disinterested kindness of the Son who was to be the victim, should in nothing be defeated by the obstinacy of sinners: that he would bring every human being to his feet, to the praise of his glorious grace; or to the praise of his glorious justice: so as should perfectly please the Father; and perfectly please the Son; and perfectly please all unfallen beings; and so that a work of mercy should be accomplished by the Son, the fame and glory of which should resound throughout the universe.

Those who will be saved were 'chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world.'—Eph. i. 4. They are, however, 'by nature the children of wrath, even as others.'—Eph. ii. 3. Not one of them can be persuaded to come unto the Son; 'except, says he, The Father which hath sent me draw him.'—John, vi. 44. The Father is that Person; that Sanctifier, that Regenerator, that Spirit, that Holy Ghost; who draweth to the Son all who 'come to him.' They are 'born of God.'—John, i. 13. Born of the only One God. They are made to obtain that 'eternal life which God that cannot lie, promised before the world began.'—Tit. i. 2. 'Promised' to whom? Not to them. They did not exist. 'Promised' to The Son, while yet

‘ in the form of God ;’ while yet in ‘ the glory which, says he, I had with thee before the world was.’ Agreeably to this promise, at the Son’s intercession, all his elect are ‘ sanctified by God The Father ; and preserved by Christ Jesus, and called.’—Jude, 1. ‘ Ask of me, said The Father, and I will give thee the uttermost parts of the earth (all nations) for thy possession.’—Ps. i. Hence the Son knew, before he descended to his state of abasement, the victories he would achieve. How ? By ‘ the saving strength of that right hand’ to which he was to be exalted, after his deepest abasement : by the Holy Ghost : by God the Sanctifier. ‘ Sit thou on my right hand till I,’ I the Father, I Jehovah, I the Omnipotent Spirit, ‘ make thy foes thy footstool.’ Accordingly, ‘ This Man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sin, forever sat down on the right hand of God : from thenceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool.’—Heb. x. 12, 13. ‘ Expecting,’ as the certain result, to see all his chosen ones voluntarily at his feet : and to hear them ‘ confess that he is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.’ For God worketh in them both to will and to do. He hath given to the Son, to rule them by his influence. At his wish, Omnipotence effects their salvation. He accordingly says, ‘ My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me : and I give unto them eternal life : and they shall never perish : neither shall any pluck them out of my hand. My Father which gave them me, is greater than all : (‘ greater than I,’ chap. xiv. 28.) and none is able to pluck them out of my Father’s hand.’—John, x. 27.

We then believe in God ; not only as Father, but as Holy : and not only as Holy, but as Spirit or Ghost : not only as Creator and Lawgiver, but as Ghost imparting holiness and peace to our guilty and wretched souls.



‘The Holy Ghost had said, This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord.’—Heb. x. 16. ‘Holy Ghost’ and ‘Lord’ are here, One Person. And what did he say he would do? ‘I will put my laws into their hearts; and in their minds will I write them: and their sins and iniquities will I remember no more.’ This is The Holy Ghost in whose name we are baptized. This is no Third Person. We adore him as the First Person in the Universe.

I humbly ask the reader to run over the seventeenth chapter of John. In it, The Son speaks no parables. In reading it, his character as Son and Messiah and Intercessor, is seen. The Person with whom he intercedes, he calls ‘Father,’ ‘Holy Father,’ ‘O Father,’ ‘O righteous Father.’ He lets us know clearly what Person is his Divinity. ‘Thou Father art in me, and I in thee.’ He reveals The Father whom the world knew not: whom no man knoweth, except the Son, and those to whom the Son reveals him. And he here reveals him as the Holy Ghost, The Sanctifier. He intercedes for his disciples that the Holy Father would ‘sanctify them:’ and not them only, but all who should ‘believe on him through their word: that they all may be one: as Thou Father art in me, and I in thee; that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou didst send me.’ The importance of understanding this matter, now revealed, and consequently intelligible, is set forth. ‘This is Eternal Life, that they may know thee the ONLY TRUE GOD, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent.’

We are now through with the commission to baptize; and have found nothing of the Trinity of Persons, equal in power and glory, to which we adverted in the beginning of this article. In reading the bible, they no where

occur. A pious man may therefore be asked, By what authority he gives these sacred names Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, to 'persons' unknown to the bible? Is there not in this, an approach to profanity? The kings of Europe have an order of nobility, called 'the order of the Holy Ghost.' And it deserves serious enquiry, whether men do not use equal boldness in applying these sacred names to three unknown Persons in one unknown essence. 'Trinity:' 'Three equal persons:' are no more mentioned in the bible, than the 'Three faces of Brachma, Veeshnu, and Seeva, formed on one body:' or, 'Three faces on three distinct heads, united to one form.' They are human contrivances, like the mysteries of mythological divinity in all pagan antiquity.

Dr. Dwight has characterized The Holy Ghost in an intelligible and masterly manner. His definition would have been complete, with the addition, *As the words Holy Ghost are used in sundry passages.* This addition is necessary, because

*The words Holy Ghost are used in scripture with diverse meanings.*

God is πνεῦμα, Ghost or Spirit. So Christ told a woman of Samaria. She with the less enlightened Israelites residing in Samaria, thought that God ought to be worshipped there only: and not at Jerusalem; as the Jews believed. When he said, 'God is a Ghost, a Spirit;' he meant to teach that men might worship God either on mount Gerizim, or at Jerusalem, or any where: as God is every where. The expression 'God is a Spirit,' teaches nothing of his moral character. When we read that 'God is love,' we have in amount his whole moral character. Put these two together, and God is a Holy as well as Ghostly or Spiritual

being. And when the work before him is that of changing the hearts of sinners, or increasing holiness in the regenerated; then, 'God is the Holy Ghost, employed in his most benevolent and wonderful work, that of restoring holiness to the soul of man; in his most glorious character, that of the Sanctifier; in a work demanding the supreme gratitude of mankind.'—Dr. Dwight.

But a man may say, My Spirit grieves, strives, resolves, rejoices. In analogy with this, God says, 'My Spirit shall not always strive with man.' I will not always put forth my powerful influence to restrain from sin, and excite to holiness.

'God hath given unto us his Holy Spirit.'—I. Thess. iv. 8. i. e. God hath given unto us his sanctifying influence; or imparted to us his disinterested temper; a heart of love; a godlike kindness: which are effects of that influence.

There are passages, therefore, where the Holy Ghost means, not God an agent; but the agency itself; or the effects of that agency in men. And sometimes that agency, called Holy Ghost, is not an imparting of holiness to the heart; but an imparting of prophetic knowledge to the understanding; or miraculous gifts. And sometimes, that powerful influence is itself personified; and is still called Holy Ghost. It is then a Comforter or Guide: and then of course has the properties of a person ascribed to it; such as change of place, knowledge, bodily organs, and mental powers. For this is the effect of the figure of personification. So the stones cry out: and the mountains clap their hands.

'Holy men spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.' If in this passage, we understand by 'Holy Ghost,' the mighty influence which disclosed to them future events; or, God himself imparting that influence; we can-



not much err. In either case, The Holy Ghost is not the Sanctifier, but the Revealer of his counsels.

‘The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee.’—Luke, i. 35. ‘Holy Ghost,’ and ‘power of the Highest,’ here illustrate the same thing. ‘Holy Ghost’ is the effective ‘power of the Highest,’ producing the miraculous conception.

The Holy Ghost is promised to the disciples ‘to teach them all things, and to bring all things to their remembrance, whatsoever Christ had said unto them.’—John, xiv. ‘The Spirit of truth shall guide them into all truth.’—John, xvi. ‘The anointing which ye have received teacheth you of all things.’—I. John, ii. ‘The Holy Ghost,’ ‘The Spirit of truth,’ and ‘The anointing,’ in these three passages, are all the same. They are God’s influence with its effects in men’s understandings and hearts.

Sometimes The Holy Ghost is shed forth, shed on us abundantly, poured out or down. In such passages, Holy Ghost never means God; but his power exerted, with its effects: his influence as a producing cause, with the effects produced. So he is said to pour out his indignation . . . .his wrath . . . .when his power is displayed in inflicting miseries upon us.

When God sends desolation and wild beasts into Babylon, it is said, ‘His Spirit hath gathered them.’—Isa. xxxiv. 16. ‘His Spirit’ is here his providential agency.

John the Baptist said, ‘I baptize you with water: but he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire.’—Matt. iii. 11. Neither the water, the Holy Ghost, nor the fire were God in any sense: but figures setting forth the purifying influences of Christ, and the holy and miraculous effects of his gospel and reign.

When Jesus was baptized, and ‘went up out of the water, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him.’—Math. iii. 16. Here was a miraculous effect of divine power, and it was visible ; and is called ‘The Spirit of God.’

Holy Ghost in some passages, means the power of working miracles ; or the miracles which are wrought ; or the power of God exerted in their production : and sometimes in a comprehensive manner, the words embrace them all ; as on the day of pentecost.

At an interview with the disciples after his resurrection, Jesus said, ‘Behold I send the promise of my Father upon you : but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high.’—Luke, xxviii. 49. By what appears when this was fulfilled ; ‘The promise of the Father,’ and ‘the power from on high,’ was the power of working miracles, imparted by the exalted Son, as he received it from the Father. And this is called the Holy Ghost : with which they were baptized.

Luke mentions the subject again in Acts, i. 4. ‘And being assembled with them, he commanded that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, saith he, ye have heard of me. For John truly baptized with water : but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost, not many days hence.’

Accordingly on the day of pentecost, ‘They were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind : and it filled the place where they were sitting.’ ‘And there appeared unto them cloven tongues, like as of fire : and it (the miraculous fire) sat upon each of them. And they were filled with the Holy Ghost (an inspiring influence ;)

and they began to speak with other tongues as the Spirit (supernatural power producing miraculous acquaintance with languages) gave them utterance.' Which Peter immediately explains. 'Therefore Jesus being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father, the promise of the Holy Ghost; he *hath shed forth this which ye now see and hear.*'

Here obviously The Father is the invisible God. Christ 'shed forth' that which he 'had received of the Father,' and which the Father had 'promised him.' And that which he 'shed forth' was the 'Holy Ghost,' 'which, saith Peter, ye now *see and hear.*' He did not shed forth any third person upon them, whom they '*saw and heard.*'

He rendered the scene awakening to the multitude by the supernatural wonders which he displayed; by the rushing wind, and the sound from heaven: by fiery cloven tongues on the heads of the apostles: by the zeal and energy of the speakers, uttering what was divinely imparted to them in languages they had never learned: by signs and wonders which were done by the apostles: by wonders in heaven above, and signs on the earth beneath: by the darkened sun: by blood and fire and vapor of smoke passing before the beholders: by prophetic dreams and visions. All things inspiring solemnity, 'fear came upon every soul.'

'And Peter standing up with the eleven, lifted up his voice and said; This is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel. Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus, of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you, as ye yourselves also know; him being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain: whom God hath raised up. For David speaketh concerning



him, Thou wilt not leave my SOUL in HADES ; neither wilt thou suffer thine holy one (as to his flesh) to see putrefaction. This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses. For David saith, ‘The LORD said unto my Lord, (David’s Adonai,) Sit thou on my right hand, until I make thy foes thy footstool.’

The inference from the whole is that which I have constantly maintained. ‘Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus whom ye crucified, both Lord and Christ.’—Acts, ii. 36.

There were at this time distant disciples, ‘sanctified by God the Father ;’ who well knew that God is a Ghost ; and that God is Holy ; and that he is the author of holiness in all saints : who nevertheless had not yet heard of that Holy Ghost which was shed forth at Jerusalem ; and which they of the city ‘*saw and heard*. Paul at Ephesus found about twelve such disciples. These twelve were apprised of Paul’s meaning, when he asked them, ‘Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed ? And they said unto him, We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost ;’ i. e. any such Holy Ghost as you speak of : any such effusion of miraculous gifts, sent down by Christ, since he went up.

Paul informed them ; and baptized them ‘in the name of the Lord Jesus :’ that is in the name of The Son. This was sufficient. ‘He then laid his hands on them ; and The Holy Ghost’ (of which they had not before heard) came upon them ; and they spake with TONGUES, and PROPHESIED.’—Acts, xix. They, too, shared in the miraculous influence and its miraculous effects, viz : ‘Tongues,’ and ‘Prophecy :’ called The Holy Ghost of which they had not before heard. Such miraculous powers were plentifully ‘shed forth’ by ‘the Son of man stand-

ing on the right hand of God,' (Acts, vii. 56,) for the establishment of men's faith in the resurrection of him whom 'God had made both Lord and Christ.' And these miraculous gifts and wonders shed forth, are called the Holy Ghost shed forth: which Holy Ghost, Peter says, they 'saw and heard.'

Much the same meaning is to be attached to the words Holy Ghost, in the passages which speak of the blasphemy, not to be forgiven, neither in this world, nor in the world to come. The denunciation of damnation without hope, was uttered against those who ascribed the miracles of Jesus to Beel-zebub, the master of flies.—Matt. xii. 24. This unpardonable sin was committed by those who *saw the Holy Ghost*, i. e. the miraculous wonders which demonstrated the divine mission of the Son: they verbally ascribing the miracles to the Prince of demons.

Other bold blasphemers, however, have cause of fearful alarm, when they set their mouths against the Omnipotent.

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In my judgment, due honors are not rendered to the Holy Ghost, *as the words Holy Ghost are used in sundry passages*, unless we believe and acknowledge that he is 'God; employed in his most benevolent and wonderful work, that of restoring holiness to the soul of man; in his most glorious character, that of the Sanctifier.' And we degrade him in our thoughts and language, when we speak of him as a third person; sent down; or poured forth; or proceeding from the Father and the Son; or acting subordinately to other persons; or waiving his supremacy; or accepting an office.

He is The LORD God Almighty : has no equals ; no peers ; no counsellors about his throne. He is One. In his own right and majesty, and of his own will, and according to his own independent purpose ; he rules the immensity of intelligent beings. He hath mercy on whom he will have mercy : converts them by his peerless influence : draws them to his Christ ; and makes them trophies of his victorious grace.

This Holy Ghost is not to be approached by sinners, however penitent ; regardless of the 'One Mediator, the Man Christ Jesus.'

On the other hand, This Holy Ghost doth not even by a Mediator return to sinners, and regenerate, and forgive them ; by lowering his own rights and majesty : nor by putting off the character of uncontrollable sovereign : nor by accepting an inferior station : nor by being sent by other persons to perform ministerial work. Nor does he resign his rank as first person, and take that of third : nor admit any other person as his equal in power and glory. Nor can he receive an office or gift or reward from another. Such a gospel is another gospel. And should I, or an angel from heaven, preach it (knowingly ; ) there is fearful reason to judge, from what Paul has said, that we should be accursed.

Such theology is derogatory to 'The Holy One : ' bewilders our souls when we contemplate the 'One Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus : ' and dishonors The Holy Ghost the Sanctifier, making him an office holder proceeding from The Father and The Son : representing him as sent ; subordinate : performing 'office work.' There is no end to the difficulties hanging about the mystery, dark as Egypt, of three equal persons in one substratum.



Those who make little or nothing of the Humanity of Christ, suppose that his Divinity was economically, though not really, inferior to the Divinity of the Father : that the Divinity of the Son was economically servant, messenger, subordinate to the Divinity of the Father : that the Divinity of the Father economically exalted the Divinity of the Son : that the Divinity of the Father, was Father to the Divinity of the Son : and that the Divinity of the Son, was Son to the Divinity of the Father. This, I suppose, with one more Divinity, that of the Holy Ghost, economically proceeding from the Divinity of the Father, and the Divinity of the Son, is called ‘The Holy and Indivisible Trinity.’ It seems to me to make Three Persons : Three Gods with a little disguise. I cannot understand it, otherwise than as ‘The Unknown Darkness.’

Dr. Dwight says, ‘On all hands it is agreed, that the Holy Ghost is acknowledged by trinitarians, to be a Divine Person ; but by unitarians, only a Divine Attribute, usually the Power of God.’—p. 3.

If trinitarians do think that Holy Ghost, in *all passages*, means a Person ; and unitarians only an Attribute, or Power ; they are on both sides totally mistaken. But it is questionable whether any one trinitarian or unitarian, who has much studied the bible, will *deliberately* say that Holy Ghost, in *all passages*, means either a Person or an Attribute : or deny that in some passages, Holy Ghost means the one ; and in others, the other. From overlooking this, Dr. Dwight has employed many paragraphs to little purpose.

There can be no difficulty, unless it be artificially created, in knowing that the words ‘Holy Ghost, in sundry passages, intend the self-same Person as God Supreme. Isa. vi. 8—‘I heard the voice of Jehovah, saying, Go,

tell this people, hear ye indeed, but understand not.' Acts, xxviii. 25—' Well spake The Holy Ghost by Isaiah the prophet, saying, Go, tell this people, hearing ye shall hear, and not understand.' That must be a crafty contrivance which can create a doubt, whether 'Jehovah' and 'Holy Ghost', in these two passages, intend one and the self-same Person. And just as artificial must be the darkness which can create a doubt, whether this Person be identical with the Divinity of Christ. John, xii. 39—' Therefore, they could not believe ; because Isaiah said, He hath blinded their eyes, and hardened their heart ; that they should not see with their eyes, nor understand with their heart. These things said Isaiah, when he saw his (Christ's) glory and spake of him.'

The Divinity of Christ was, therefore, the 'Jehovah,' and the 'Holy Ghost,' of whom Isaiah spake: the self-same person : so clearly the same, as absolutely to exclude first, second, and third from the whole account.





## APPENDIX.

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### [A.]

It is maintained by Dr. Watts, and by those who believe with him ; and is the doctrine I advocate : that the Godhead of Christ, is the very same as the Godhead of the Father. The Divinity of Christ is the Jehovah of the old testament ; or, ‘ I am that I am : ’ in sundry passages denominated the Holy Ghost.

### [B.]

The Greek word προσκύνω, to worship, signifies to kiss, adore, or venerate. It is derived from κύων a dog, and προς unto : to be a dog unto one. It denotes homage to a superior. This homage is qualified by the object to whom it is addressed. It is used in scripture to express customary respect to great men ; to prophets, rulers, and learned doctors. Our translators have sometimes in the old testament, said, ‘ did obeisance,’ and ‘ bowed himself : ’ but in the new testament, they have uniformly said, ‘ worshipped.’ When the Supreme God is the object, the worship is supreme.

Our word adore, is, *ad os manum admove*re : to move the hand to the mouth. Men confined to the earth, regarded the heavenly luminaries as Divinities. In adoring them, they could not get near them. To remedy, as well

as they could, the inconvenience of their distance ; they would kiss their hands, and stretch them up toward their Gods, to testify their respect for them ; and that they would come to them, if they could. Job did not adore these Divinities. ‘ If, says he, I beheld the sun when it shined, or the moon walking in brightness, and my mouth hath kissed my hands ; I should have denied the God that is above.’—Job, xxxi. 26.

Paul directs that ‘ men pray every where, lifting up holy hands :’ to ‘ One God and One Mediator.’—I. Tim. ii. 5, 8.

## [C.]

Professor Stewart’s views of the Sonship of Christ, correspond in the main with those I deem scriptural. He says, ‘ Jesus had called God his Father. And the Jews seemed to suppose in a peculiar sense. But it did not follow that he meant to assert his divine nature. Rather the contrary appears. ‘ Say ye of him whom the Father hath sanctified and sent into the world. . . . ?’ If your magistrates are called Elohim, (Gods,) is it presumption in me to call myself The Son of God ? This leaves the question of his Divinity unagitated : but vindicates the language he had used, against the malevolence of the Jews.’ ‘ The term, Son of God does not appropriately designate Christ as Divine : but as the incarnate mediator ; as him whom the ‘ Father had sanctified and sent into the world.’ Did the Father sanctify and send into the world, his Son as God, who is infinitely perfect and immutable ?’

The Professor means that the Father did not sanctify his Son as God Supreme ; nor send him into the world as God Supreme. He has no Son who is God Supreme. ‘ God Supreme is infinitely perfect and immutable :’ and not Son to any one.

The Professor continues. 'As Mediator—as Messiah, Christ was sent: as Son, he filled and acted in a subordinate capacity. How then can his being Son, prove him to be Divine ?'

True indeed. As Divinity ; as Jehovah ; 'infinitely perfect and immutable ;' he could be neither 'Son,' nor 'sent,' nor act 'in a subordinate capacity.' If we ascribe these inferior characters, or offices, or missions, to Supreme Divinity ; or to any second or third persons who are supposed to be Divinity ; we treat The Great Supreme with unauthorized irreverence. Supreme Divinity is Son to no God ; is anointed to office by no God. He maintains his royal state ; his peerless majesty.

Further from the Professor. 'Commonly and appropriately, Son of God designates the incarnate Messiah, as born in a manner supernatural (Luke i. 35. comp. iii. 38 ;) as the special object of divine love (Matt. xvii. 5. Col. i. 13. John, iii. 35 ;) and as exhibiting the best and highest resemblance of the Father (Col. i. 15. Heb. i. 3. John, i. 14. and x. 38. and xiv. 10.) Would theologians keep these ideas in view, I cannot help thinking they might be able to understand each other better ; and to reason more conclusively.'

I think so too. There would be a new era in religious instruction. Ideas, as well as words, would be presented to the people from sabbath to sabbath.

'But, continues the Professor, as the view here given, of the appropriate signification of the phrase Son of God, differs from that of most of the ancient fathers, who maintained the doctrine of eternal generation, and from that of many modern theologians, who have trodden in their steps ; I must dwell a moment longer on the subject.'



‘The appellation Son of God, was, no doubt, derived by the Jews, from Ps. ii. and II. Sam. vii. 14. In using the appellation, I am inclined to think, they had reference principally to the regal office and the splendor of their expected Messiah.’

‘In support of filiation, as to the Divinity of Christ; Hebrews 1st chapter is urged,’ (meaning, I suppose, by common trinitarians,) ‘where the apostle contends for the superiority of Christ over angels; because ‘he has by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they,’ i. e. he is a *Son*. But does not this argument prove the reverse of what it was intended to prove? The divine nature is self-existent and eternal. Could Christ, then, as divine, *obtain* a name by inheritance? Could he *become* a Son, if as Son he is divine?’

I suppose not. In his created nature, he is Son both to God and man. As God, he is Son neither to God or man.

‘The passage in II. Sam. vii. 14, presents the same difficulty. ‘I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a Son.’ How can *eternal filiation* be supported by this? Could there be a *promise* of being to him a Father, if he had already been a Son from everlasting?’

‘Psalm ii. 7, so often used to prove the doctrine of eternal generation, seems to me very injudiciously chosen for this purpose. ‘Thou art my Son: this day have I begotten thee.’ This Psalm predicts the exaltation and the glory of the Messiah: and Peter says, this had its accomplishment, when Christ was raised from the dead, by the power of the Father—Acts xiii. How can *this day* mean from eternity?’

‘Besides; in I. Cor. xv. 28, it is affirmed that when all the enemies of the church shall be subdued, ‘The Son

himself shall be subject to the Father, that God may be all in all.' As the eternal, self-existent God, can this be said of him? Most certainly not.' I add, Most certainly not. If hereditary prejudice were not stronger than bible authority, every man would say, Most certainly not.

'In other cases, where Son of God designates a divine nature, it does this only because *it has come by usage* to be a proper name; like the terms Christ or Messiah which may designate either the human or divine nature of Christ, or both of them.'

'By usage.' Not, I am sure, by *scripture* 'usage' in any one instance. Father and Son are correlates: stand in opposite relation to each other. The bible never confounds them.\*

'This simple view of the subject, it seems to me, might disembarass some theological discussions of many paragraphs, which are now *very obscure*; and, at least to me, *unprofitable*, as well as *unintelligible*. The ancient fathers involved themselves in more than a Cretan labyrinth, by undertaking to defend the eternal generation of the Son. If any one wishes to see how easy it is to accumulate *words without meaning*; and perplex common minds with representations, which *afford no instruction*; let

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\* Should I so depart from 'the appropriate meaning of Son,' as to say, 'Simon Son of Jonas:' and by my 'usage,' mean by Son, sometimes Simon, and sometimes Jonas, and sometimes both of them: I question whether men would understand me. I doubt whether 'Son' ever has 'come by *usage* to be a proper name:' any more than daughter. It would be more incongruous than 'Praise-God Barebone,' 'Kill-Sin Pimple,' 'Fight-the-good-fight-of-Faith White;' or others of an English jury in the time of 'the Commonwealth.' [Hume's Hist.] Whereas Smith, Carpenter, Dyer, and Saddler, are 'by usage,' familiar to us, as proper names. Yet those who have these names, derived them down from ancestors who were of these respective trades. So Messiah and Christ, from names of office, become by usage, proper names. Son, or daughter are not proper names.

him plunge into the abyss of the speculations of the fathers on this subject.'

The foregoing extracts from Professor Stewart, are in his Letters, third edition, pp. 129, 130, 131, 133. He saw how 'common minds are perplexed by *words without meaning*:' by 'representations which *afford no instruction*:' by an eternal generation of the Son in the essence of the God-head, which is '*obscure*,' '*unprofitable*,' '*unintelligible*:' and I may add, unreal, unscriptural, and fabulous. The question, therefore, whether 'Son of God,' be the Divinity or Humanity of Christ, is momentous. It places us on the dividing line between 'a Cretan labyrinth;' and a scriptural platform.

Watts also says, 'The Sonship of Christ does not belong to the divine nature; but to his human nature, considered in its original derivation from God; and in its being appointed to the sacred office of Messiah. Then have we an obvious interpretation of those scriptures which have given so much pains to our divines, viz: John, v. 19—'The Son can do nothing of himself.' Mark, xiii. 32—'Of that day, knoweth not the Son, but the Father.' Heb. v. 8—'Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered.' Now this Sonship refers to verse 5—'Thou art my Son: *to-day* have I begotten thee.'

If these passages do not show that the Son spoke literal truth, when he said, 'The Father is greater than I;' the bible is incapable of an honest defence. But if The Son is the Humanity of Christ; all the passages wherein the Son is represented as invested with sublime powers by God, or bearing characters inferior to God; have an easy explanation. They are applicable to The Son as distinguished from the Unchangeable God; though existing



and acting in conjunction with him. And some of the passages discover him as Son in his existence before his incarnation; some, in his incarnate state; and some, in the state in which he is now 'glorified with the glory which he had with the Father before the world was.'—Vid. Watts, vol. 6, p. 615.

'Is God ever called Father, in scripture, as giving origin or birth to the Divinity of Christ?' Not once. 'Is the Son, or the Word, or the Spirit, or any Person *as Divinity*, represented as derived from God The Father?' Not once.

'The title Son of God hath been supposed to be given to Christ on account of an eternal generation of the Son, in the divine essence, consubstantial, co-eternal, and co-equal with The Father. But I am persuaded it can never be necessary to salvation to believe Christ to be the Eternal Son of God, as a distinct person in the divine nature. This is inconceivable. Nor is this consubstantial Sonship clearly enough revealed in scripture, to make it a fundamental article; and damn all who do not receive it. And I will never pronounce an anathema upon them.'—Watts, p. 395.

'We know from scripture, that The Son hath a nature *inferior* to Godhead.'—Ibid. p. 377.

'Son of God,' in scripture, most generally (not always) denotes that eminent, that peculiar person, derived from God; who was the Messiah, Mediator, and Savior. And 'Son of Man,' generally (not always) denotes that eminent, that peculiar Son, who was 'the seed of the woman:' the same Messiah, Mediator, and Savior.

It is a great truth that the object of the christian's love, and trust, and worship, hath two distinct natures. He is true God; and true Man. But when Christ calls himself 'The Son of God,' and 'Son of Man;' an eternal Sonship

in God's essence, (a fable,) or even his Divinity, (a truth,) is more than Christ ever designed by these words.

[D.]

In I. John, v. we read: ver. 1—'Whosoever believeth that Jesus is The Christ, is born of God:' ver. 5—'Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is The Son of God?' ver. 6, 7, 8—'This is he that came by water and blood, even Jesus Christ: not by water only, but by *water* and *blood*: and it is the *spirit* that beareth witness, because the spirit is *truth*. For there are three that bear record, [in heaven, The Father, The Word, and The Holy Ghost: and these three are one. And there are three that bear record in earth,] the *spirit*, and the *water*, and the *blood*: and these three agree in one.'

The words in brackets are supposed to be an interpolation; foisted into the sacred text, by some trinitarians, who boldly added to the word of God, what they thought a useful improvement: probably after the Arian controversy. For during that controversy, (fourth century,) though the bible was ransacked for passages against Arius; and texts brought against him which were totally irrelevant; this passage was not used. I however stay not to give my reasons for regarding the words as no part of God's inspired scriptures. I appeal to the most learned divines in Europe and America, both trinitarians and unitarians.

As Scott's Family Bible is accessible to all, I refer the common reader to what he has written on the passage. He manifestly wished to retain it, if honestly he could. But he was too honest a man to pretend that it is entitled to our confidence.

The words which do belong to the bible are these: 'there are three that bear record, the *spirit*, and the *water*,

and the *blood* : and these three agree in one ;' i. e. in one testimony that Jesus is The Messiah, or The Christ ; The Son of God. Without the interpolation, the thread of the discourse is clear and unbroken. The spurious words in the brackets, if thought genuine, decide nothing against the doctrine I advocate : as others have sufficiently shown.

[E.]

Dr. Brownlee, in his Letters, (Roman Catholic Controversy,) says, ' All false religions lodge power with the priests, to rule over and dictate to the conscience.'

' God is exclusively Lord of conscience. He will not share his throne with any miserable and arrogant tyrant. The catholic church permits no right of private judgment. The priests wield a system which converts man into a mechanical engine ; in order that he may think, and dispose of his soul and body and property, just as the holy priests prescribe.'

' Will any man put his conscience in the keeping of pope or priest ? God alone can prescribe our Creed, and Form of Worship. If the proudest pope that ever set foot on the neck of king or emperor should rise up and dictate these ; he would be that man of sin, sitting in the temple of God, doing God's work by a shocking usurpation. Be he pope, priest, or protestant who would do this, he usurps the throne of God : he sits in the temple of God, showing that *he* is God. If this be not blasphemous daring, I know not what is.'

' The human mind ventures to propose a bedlam for the man who would enact the scenes of former days ; pass gag-laws against freedom of speech and the press ; forge chains for conscience ; and prevent the progress of glorious liberty. This is Protestantism.'



‘The spirit of true religion is the unsubduable spirit of Liberty. Wherever the worship of The Holy One has been established by the gospel, liberty has reigned. And just in proportion as the gospel is left unshackled by the traditions, and interested schemes of men ; has liberty had her splendid triumphs.’

‘Pagan and Roman religion, and those which are only half-reformed, have ever permitted Lords temporal and spiritual to tyrannize over the church: to make a mere tool of her: until they have made her a hacknied vile thing; and loathsomely impure. They have converted her into the Mother of harlots, and abominations of the earth.’

The man who would hold the balance even between the catholic and protestant, must say: ‘As in water face answers to face; so the heart of man to man:’ of catholic to protestant. Whether protestants, either in theory or practice, respected ‘the rights of private judgment,’ any more than catholics, during the early ages of their Protest: Neal’s History of the Puritans may render problematical. In the times reviewed by him, whoever acquired the power, swayed it to their own emolument; regardless of the tears and sufferings of all others. And so it has been, with rare exceptions, ever since.

Yet there were Protestant Dissenters in those early days, who maintained ‘the natural right which every man has to judge for himself, and profess that religion he apprehends most agreeable to truth; without being determined by the prejudices of education, the laws of the magistrate, or the decrees of synods. This principle effectually puts an end to all impositions. And unless it be allowed, I am afraid our separation from the church of Rome can hardly be justified. The Bible, and that only, is the

religion of protestants. And every one making use of the helps that God has put into his hands, must learn and understand it for himself as well as he can.'—Neal.

This being admitted as the present protestant profession, gives the protestant a distinguished pre-eminence above the catholic. And whenever the protestant departs from it, and the catholic practices it; the catholic in practice has a similar pre-eminence. And that this is possible, we have only to remember that knowledge may be amply diffused in a branch of the catholic church; while ignorance prevails in a branch of the protestant church. In that case, the protestant may be duped; and the catholic free. Knowledge is power. And in proportion as knowledge is diffused among the lower classes; in that proportion they are able to right themselves: and whether catholic or protestant, they will defend themselves.

In view of human depravity, just as history and the bible describe it; we will not take our doctrines, or rules of discipline, or forms of worship, from the Pope, any more than from Black Hawk; or from ancient councils; or from present assemblies of legislative ecclesiastics: but from the Bible. At the same time, we remember that we are sharers in that depravity. We will therefore let down the hand of persecution; and allow him who differs from us, to stand or fall before his own Master.

We invite every man to enlighten our understanding: but allow no man's right to control it. We would present light and truth to the understanding of our fellow servants, as far as we can: but would control no man's understanding or conscience. The LORD is Judge.

[F.—p. 23.]

## LOGOS, THE WORD.

Logos, as used in the bible, sometimes (not always) denotes a personal agent: a being who reveals God's wisdom: and by whom God accomplishes the things his wisdom has designed. It then intends the Son of God. It is the humanity of Christ; and never his Divinity.

If there is a single exception to this, it is John, i. 1. And the adjuncts are averse to the supposition even here. 'The Logos was made flesh, and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth. And we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father.'—John, i. 14. If he was the only begotten of the Father; then he was not the Father who begat him. And if he dwelt among us, and we saw him; then he was not the invisible God.

'No man hath seen God at any time. The only begotten Son who was (*ἐν*, imp. tense) in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him.'—ver. 18. Hence the Logos, called the only begotten Son, was not the Father: but was in the Father's bosom. He was not the Father: but declared or revealed him. The Logos or Son was visible. God Supreme is invisible. This same John who says, 'No man hath seen God at any time,' speaking of the Logos 'which was in the beginning,' says; 'which we have seen with our eyes; which we have looked upon; and our hands have handled.'—I. John, i. 1, 2. Hence with certainty, the Logos, if called God, is not the God who is invisible. He is the Man Jesus, who is visible.

And this is further manifest from John, i. 1. where he is called 'God. For there are adjuncts which forbid the supposition that Logos was Supreme Divinity; and no adjuncts which require it. 'The Logos was with God.' If the Logos was the invisible God, what God was he with?



And what can John mean when he says, 'We have seen him with our eyes?' and 'have looked upon him?' and 'our hands have handled him?' And he 'was the only begotten Son?' and 'was in the bosom of the Father?'

With such adjuncts, must we say, the Logos is God 'whom no man hath seen at any time?' The Logos had a different opinion of himself. For he told the high priest that hereafter, he should *see* him coming in the clouds. Yea, he knew that the priest and Pilate and his enemies *saw* him then; and handled him, and buffeted him, and spit upon him; and were about to crucify him.

God Supreme is unbegotten, and invisible, and untangible. John informs us that the Logos was begotten, and visible, and tangible: and that 'The Logos was with God: and The Logos was God.'

Here is a difficulty. Professor Stewart comes directly up to the passage, and attempts a solution. Others commonly talk round about it, till meaning is lost in empty words.

The Professor says; 'The Logos was with God: i. e. with God the Father. This is capable of no tolerable interpretation, without supposing that The Logos who was with God, was in some respect or other, different or diverse from the God with whom he was: and therefore by no means to be confounded with him.' I, too, cannot think the Logos was the God with whom he was. To say God was with himself, is too trifling.

Logos does indeed sometimes mean the wisdom, and the power of God. But to say, God's wisdom, or his power, is with God; though less trifling than to say, God is with himself; seems not satisfactory. For as the Professor says, 'If a man should gravely assert that the wisdom or power of Peter is with Peter: and add, the wisdom

and power of Peter are Peter: with what class of mystics should we rank him? Clearly then, to say Peter is with Peter, and Peter is Peter, would be frivolous.

The supposition of two equal persons in God, will not touch the difficulty. For the passage says nothing more of two persons in God, than of two rivers, or two mountains in him. Had it mentioned such persons, difficulties would have thickened around us. If any plurality is expressed in the passage, it is plurality of Gods: not of persons. 'The Logos was with *God*; and the Logos was *God*.' Not The Logos was one person: and The Logos was with another person, in one essence.

If other passages teach that there are several infinite persons in one essence; it would seem as trifling to say they were with one another, as to say, the wisdom and power of God are with God. Where else could they be?

'What, says the Professor, could be the object of John in asserting that the Logos was *with* God? I answer: to be with one, indicates conjunction, communion, familiarity, society. The only begotten Son is said to be 'in the bosom of the Father;' which is a phrase of similar import. Christians are promised, as the summit of their felicity, that they shall be with God.'

This we heartily approve. For when Jesus foretold that the disciples would leave him alone, he adds, 'And yet I am not alone, because the Father is with me.'—John, xvi. 32.

How then are we to understand, 'The Logos was with God, and the Logos was God?'

The Professor's solution is this. 'God as Father is meant in the first instance: and the Divinity without reference to the distinction of Father in the second.'—p. 65.

All I can make of this, is, God simply as God, was with God as Father. I would think it a favor to accord with the Professor. But on this point, I see not that I can. Should another man say, Peter merely as Peter, was with Peter the Apostle: it would seem flat and insipid.

I know but one solution which seems more likely to be true than all others. It follows.

Seeing, That the Logos is here used as a personal agent :

That 'the Logos was in the beginning' (beginning of the world, as Stewart has justly explained :)

That 'the Logos was with God : ' (meaning as Stewart says, '*conjunctissimus Deo*,' most intimately connected with God the Father :)

That the Logos is 'diverse from that God with whom he was ; and therefore by no means to be confounded with him : (as Stewart says :)

That 'the Logos was the only begotten of the Father : ' (as John says :)

That 'the Logos was in the bosom of the Father : ' (which 'indicates conjunction, communion, familiarity, society : ' as Stewart says :)

That 'the Logos tabernacled in flesh, and dwelt among us : '

That 'the Logos declared (revealed) God the Father, whom no man hath seen at any time : '

That the Logos was he 'whom we have seen with our eyes ; whom we have looked upon ; and our hands have handled : '



That John saw the Logos on the isle of Patmos :

That when the Jews malignantly accused him of blasphemy for calling himself the Son of God, he defended himself by the plea that it would have been no blasphemy, had he assumed the higher title God ; as ‘ those were called Gods whom Jehovah had sanctified and sent into the world :’

That in his Humanity, ‘ he must in all things have the pre-eminence’ among those who are, in the scriptures, styled Gods :

That ‘ when God is said to descend from heaven, or to ascend thither, in the ancient scriptures ; this God is the pre-existent soul of Christ in his union with God :’ (as Watts says :)\*

That Christ’s Divinity could not be ascertained from the title God, unless the adjuncts show that the Supreme God is intended : (as Stewart justly admits :)

That in John i. 1. the adjuncts show that the invisible, un- tangible, unbegotten God *cannot* be intended : but

That the visible, tangible, begotten Son was intended :

Hence, the derived nature is the true Logos in both the expressions ; ‘ The Logos was with God : and The Logos was God.’

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\* Illustration. When Miriam and Aaron spake against Moses, ‘ The LORD *came down* in the pillar of the cloud ; and *stood in the door* of the tabernacle, and said, With Moses will I speak, mouth to mouth, even apparently (visibly :) and the similitude of the LORD shall he behold.’—Numb. xii. Moses literally saw ‘ the similitude ;’ ‘ the image of the invisible God ;’ his first begotten Son ; in a body with his radiance, in the midst of the pillar of the cloud. He ‘ spake to Moses mouth to mouth ;’ ‘ face to face as a man speaketh to his friend.’ This was ‘ the angel of God’s presence.’ He *came down*. He *went up*. He was *sent*. He ‘ *stood in the door* of the tabernacle.’ He *walked* in the camp of Israel. And, says God Supreme, ‘ My NAME is in him :’ and ‘ He shall *go before* thee.’

The Humanity 'was with God:' '*conjunctissimus Deo*,' most intimately associated with God the Father: and he was God; in the inferior, but strictly scriptural sense. For Moses and the seventy elders saw him on the mount: and it is written, 'They saw the God of Israel.' And Jacob wrestled with him: and it is written, 'He saw God face to face.'

And this interpretation can neither contravene the first command in the decalogue; nor be offensive to reason; nor appear strange to those who recollect that God the Father 'sanctified and sent into the world' his Son Jesus, whose history John was now commencing: a personage incomparably superior to others whom God had 'sanctified and sent;' and whom Jesus himself affirmed, were called Gods in the scriptures.

And as so superior a man as Stewart has attempted a solution of this difficulty; and has, as I think, failed: I beg to be understood as expressing the above opinion with great diffidence and humility.

If the opinion now expressed be correct; then Logos, used as a personal agent, is never a title of the invisible God. And John i. 1, harmonizes with the ancient scriptures to which Christ always appealed. The 'Logos was in the beginning.' 'God created all things by Jesus Christ.' He was 'sent into the world,' and was God according to the scriptures; and according to his own declaration to the accusing Jews. He was pre-eminently entitled to the appellation God, beyond all others who were 'sanctified, and sent,' and denominated 'Gods.' And there was singular propriety in John's stating this, in the introductory sentence of his gospel; in which he was about to set forth the incarnate Son who had come from 'the bosom of his Father.'

Moreover, to say, The Logos was the God, with whom he was: or, The Word of God, is the God whose Word he is: or, The Son of God is the God, whose Son he is: or, The Messenger sent, is the God who sent him: or that He 'who was in the bosom' of God was the God in whose bosom he was: this is not the language of men: this is not 'the plain artless language of nature:' is analogous to nothing known to mortals: and has no meaning which any mortal can understand.

'When Joshua was by Jericho, he lifted up his eyes, and behold there stood a man over against him with his sword drawn in his hand. And Joshua said unto him, Art thou for us or for our adversaries? And he said, nay, but as Captain of the host of the LORD am I now come. And Joshua fell on his face, and did worship, and said, What saith my Lord? And the Captain of the Lord's host said, Loose thy shoe from off thy foot: for the place whereon thou standest is holy. And the LORD said, See, I have given Jericho into thine hand.'—Josh. v, vi.

Here the Man and the LORD speak and act together: in a manner *like a literal person*. Joshua saw the Man; the Humanity; the 'Captain,' ['Prince' in the margin.] He saw the Logos, the visible actor and speaker: and he worshipped, and said 'My Lord.' And had he said, My God, or God; it would have been like other bible language. This will seem strange only to those who are unacquainted with the changes which a course of time produces in the import of words. And yet, if we forget those changes, we shall find in all ancient writings, paradoxes which defy elucidation.

Dr. Campbell's translation of John x. 33—36.—'For a good work, we do not stone thee; but for blasphemy: because thou, being Man, makest thyself God. Jesus



replied, Is it not written in your law, I said ye are Gods?

‘If the law styled them Gods, to whom the word of God was addressed, and if the language of scripture is unexceptionable; do you charge him with blasphemy, whom The Father hath constituted his Apostle to the world, for calling himself his Son?’

Surely, if ‘scripture language is unexceptionable,’ Logos was God inferior to God Supreme. And Logos was *with* God who is Supreme. But if Logos is God Supreme, he is the only being who is so. And what God he was with it would be hard to divine.

If the reader can bear it, he may make it a question, whether the title God is not given to the Man Christ Jesus, in the two following passages? and whether the adjuncts do not oblige him to think so?

Acts xx. 28.—‘Feed the church of God\* which he hath purchased with His own blood.’ Heb. i. 8—‘But unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God,† is forever and ever. Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity. Therefore God, even THY GOD hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows.’

If this construction is fair, we are relieved from the difficulty of supposing that one of the Infinite Three, shed his blood; and was afterwards made more ‘glad’ than ‘his fellows’ the other two Infinite Persons.

Moreover, it cannot surprise those who know that of old, the title God was not restricted as now to the One Supreme. The junction of ‘the Lamb that was slain’ with ‘God on the throne,’ distinguishes him from every other

\* This God has ‘blood:’ strictly ‘his own blood.’

† This God has a ‘God.’ He is ‘Son;’ and has a Father and ‘fellows.’ He was ‘anointed’ with exuberant ‘gladness’ by ‘Jehovah his God.’

created being : and entitles him to the heavenly doxologies : and entitles him, in the language of scripture, to the appellation God.

Compare two more passages. Isa. xlii. 8—‘I am Jehovah. That is my name. And my glory I will not give unto another ; (to a false God ;) neither my praise unto graven images.’ This does not mean that he will not give unto the Man Jesus, any degrees of honor, glory, and majesty, which he please : and which redound to his own glory. To this ‘Image of the invisible God,’ ‘every knee shall bow : and every tongue confess that he is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.’

Micah, v. 2, 4—‘But thou Bethlehem of Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah : yet out of thee shall he come that is to be Ruler in Israel : [his Mother was Mary. See Matt. ii.] whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting.’ [Heb. from the days of eternity. Here is his pre-existence.] Now see his union with Divinity, his greatness, his majesty. ‘And he shall stand, and rule in the strength of Jehovah : in the majesty of the name of Jehovah his God. For now shall he be great unto the ends of the earth.’

Here we ‘see the attributes of human nature in intimate conjunction with those of the divine :’ or the Logos ‘*conjunctissimus Deo*,’ most intimately joined with God : as it is expressed by Stewart. We see the Virgin’s ‘Son, ‘GREAT unto the ends of the earth :’ ‘ruling in the strength of Jehovah : in the majesty of the name of Jehovah his God.

This is he whom ‘some have been so careful to separate from the divine nature, that one is compelled to suppose he had simply a higher degree of inspiration and communion with God than other prophets.’ This is he of whom

it is boldly asked, 'what creature would dare associate himself with God in such an act of authority; and thus presume to ascend the throne of his Maker?'—Dr. Dwight. The prophet was not so careful to lower him.

Paul's inspiration was obviously by the same spirit as the prophet's. He says, 'The God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the God of glory, by the exceeding greatness of his power, wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places; far above all principality and power and might and dominion and every name that is named; not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: and hath put all things under his feet.'—Eph. i.

How can we take part with redeemed sinners in their heavenly doxologies; if we degrade our Savior's Humanity, or his Divinity? His Divinity was never raised from the dead. Nor did he shed his blood. Nor had he 'fellows;' or a Father, or Mother; or a Superior whom he called 'Jehovah, his God.' Yet he who did shed his blood; whose Father was 'Jehovah his God;' and who has 'fellows;' whom we 'have seen with our eyes;' who was raised from the dead; who was with God; who was 'sanctified and sent into the world:' He is repeatedly called God in the bible. He is The Logos. 'Nothing but impiety can, so far as I can see, be contained in a direction' to strip him of his 'authority,' his titles, and doxologies: or to question his right 'to ascend the throne of his Maker,' and to 'rule in the strength of Jehovah his God.'



[F.—p. 38.]

In all the bible, the adjective *equal* occurs but once, where it can be *pretended* that there is any comparison between persons in the Godhead. And in that one passage, there can be *pretense* of comparison only between *two* of the persons. The word *equal*, in that one passage was used by the wicked Jews. It is John v. 18. Jesus having said, ‘My Father worketh, and I work; the Jews sought the more to kill him: because he had not only broken the sabbath; but said also that God was his Father: making himself equal <sup>(150v)</sup> with God.’

I have heard preachers, in their sermons, mention this charge as conclusive evidence that the Son is equal with the Father. And it just as conclusively proves that the Son was a sabbath breaker.

But Christ’s answer implies that the charge was false: which answer was this: ‘Verily, verily, I say unto you, The Son can do nothing of himself.’ God could do all things of himself.

But had the charge been true; still the *pretense* that it implies equality of *persons* in God, is groundless. The Jews did not accuse him of making himself an equal person with another person in One God: but of making himself a God equal to the Father the Supreme God: thus making two Supreme Gods. They wanted ‘to kill him.’

If any man say that Christ as to his Divinity is *equal* to the Father; his language is not countenanced by any thing in the bible. His language clearly imports (whatever he may mean,) that there are two equal Supreme Gods.

Had Jesus Christ claimed *to be* the Supreme God, his claim would have been well founded. For, as to his Divinity, he is (not equal to, but) the Supreme God. This we learn from other passages: not from this.

And, as to his created nature or as Son ; he truly said, ' My Father is greater than I.'

If any one choose to say ; The Man Christ Jesus is equal to God the Father in power and glory : he contradicts the testimony of Christ concerning himself. He also adopts the absurd opinion, that a man, a begotten God, is equal to his unbegotten Father.

If we choose to say, (the orthodox doctrine,) there is a begotten Son in the essence of God, uncreated, eternal, consubstantial, and co-equal with the Father : still, this is not the Son who had a Mother : who was born of Mary : who was seen of the Jews : and who said, ' My Father is greater than I ;' and ' I can of mine own self do nothing :' and ' of that day, knoweth not the Son, but the Father.'

And if there are two Sons, both begotten ; the one, created and finite ; and the other, uncreated and infinite : the one begotten in the substance of the Godhead, by the Father the first person in the trinity, and having no Mother ; the other begotten by the Holy Ghost the third person, in the womb of the Virgin ; and consequently having a Mother : and if these united, constitute the Divinity and Humanity of Christ : I have as yet found no account of this in the bible.

And if we say, ' The Third Person in the trinity is equal to God The Father, and God The Son : this, as it seems to me, is objectionable language. For I know not how the adjective ' equal' can be applied to them, without making Three Supreme Gods. But if it can ; and it is true that they are ' equal : ' it cannot be pretended that the term ' equal,' is once applied to them in the bible ; either by God himself, or by any other speaker.

That there are sundry passages in the bible, in which, God is called The Holy Ghost ; is perfectly clear. And

this God is the Divinity of Christ. And in sundry passages, he repels the thought, that any other person is his equal.

[G.]

THE COVENANT OF REDEMPTION, AS SET FORTH BY GOOD

MR. FLAVEL.

‘ 1. Consider the persons transacting. These were God the Father, and God the Son.

‘ 2. Consider the business transacted between them: the Redemption of all God’s elect.

‘ 3. Consider the quality of the transaction. It was by *mutual stipulation*.

‘ 4. Consider the Articles to which they both agree. God the Father promiseth to invest God the Son with a three fold office: to make him a priest, a prophet, a king: that he will assist and strengthen him: that he will crown his work with success: and *reward* him with *great exaltation*. God the Son stipulates that he will divest himself of his glory, and not refuse any the hardest sufferings it should please the Father to inflict upon him.

‘ 5. These articles were by both parties performed *precisely and punctually*.

‘ 6. This compact between God the Father and God the Son, bears date from ETERNITY.’

This is still orthodox. It is still set forth by common preachers. The more intelligent preachers would themselves think it might need qualifying. But they let it pass. To explain, is not profitable, while dealing in mysteries.

A man who deals in ideas as well as words, with the bible before him, can say, as Watts says: ‘ If we conceive of the human soul of Christ, in its pre-existent state, as



‘the first born of every creature’—Col. i. 18: as ‘the beginning of the creation of God’—Rev. iii. 14: ‘in the bosom of the Father’—John i. 18: then, here are proper subjects for this covenant, before the foundation of the world. And a glorious covenant it was between God the Father and his Son, respecting the salvation of ruined man. The blessed soul of the Son was immediately united to the Father: and the Father might part with it *out of his bosom*: i. e. divest it of joys and glory, with its own consent, without a dissolution of the union. God might *prepare a body for it*, and *send it to dwell in flesh and blood*. The Father might subject the blessed soul of Christ incarnate to pains and anguish: and afterward give it a *high exaltation*; not only to the *glory which he had with the Father before the world was*, but to surpassing joys in his glorified body, as a *reward of his sufferings*. And scripture teacheth this.—Phil. ii. 9.’

‘And this Son accepted the terms of this covenant. ‘Lo, I come,’ &c.—Ps. xl. ‘He came forth from the Father.’—John xvi. 28. He laid aside ‘the form of God;’ ‘the glory which he had with the Father before the world was.’—John, xvii. 5. And though ‘he was rich, yet for our sake he became poor;’ and took ‘the form of a servant;’ and ‘made himself of no reputation.’—II. Cor. viii. 9.’

‘And thus the Father and Son manifest their transcendent love to poor rebel sinners in this early covenant. And this is the foundation of all that was ever done for the salvation of men. Every thing coincides admirably with the expressions of scripture on this subject. And we need not strain the words of scripture. It is made so plain, that he may run that readeth. And private christians may *understand* the early foundation of their hopes.’—p. 453.

Thus it was the Man, gloriously related to God : and not the Eternal God the second person in the essence ; which was ‘ born of a woman ;’ came ‘ under the law,’ and was ‘ made a curse for us’ by hanging on a tree.—Gal. iii. and iv. It was the Man, raised from the dead, ‘ who is gone into heaven ; and is on the right hand of God ; angels, and authorities, and powers being made subject to him.’—I. Pet. iii. 22.

An uncreated but begotten Son, equal with the Father : a Son who knew the day of judgment ; and could of himself do all things ; and could learn no obedience by the things which he suffered : God of God ; light of light ; very God of very God, crucified under Pontius Pilate ; is unknown to the bible. And as a mystery, it equals any of the arcana of popery and paganism.

### [H.]

When we speak of two distinct natures united in *one person*, we use person, not literally, but analogically. Were I asked, whether I can explain in what analogical sense they are ‘ one person ?’ I would answer, certainly I can. Otherwise, I too, am in the fault of using language which means only Ab-ra-ca-da-bra ; which I disapprove in others. Professor Stewart indeed says, ‘ I admit that it is an apparent inconsistency in the use of language : and I cannot but wish it had not been originally adopted.’—p. 55. Still, I think, it is not like ‘ three equal persons in God,’ which admits no explanation ; verbal personages which mean nothing.

The Professor justly remarks, ‘ We see the attributes of human nature in such intimate conjunction with those of the divine, that we cannot separate the agents. We do not know the manner in which the union is effected or

continued. We therefore speak of one person; i. e. one agent.' This, in general terms, expresses the amount of what we mean.

'One person in the sense in which each of us is one, Christ could not be. God cannot divest himself of his essential perfections: i. e. he is immutably perfect. Nor could the human nature of Christ have continued human nature, if it had ceased to be subject of the infirmities and affections of this nature, while he dwelt among men. In whatever way the union of the two natures was effected, it neither destroyed nor essentially changed either the divine or human nature.'—p. 53.

Dr. Watts says, 'The doctrine of unions is one of unsearchable difficulties in philosophy. Our understandings are nonplussed when we consider the union of the parts of matter: much more when we think of the union of matter and mind in every human person. But when we attempt to conceive of the most perfect union into which the blessed God may assume a creature and join it to himself, our thoughts are overwhelmed. The mode is unsearchable.'

Now then, notwithstanding the unknowable mysteries connected with the facts that the parts of matter are united: that soul and body are united: that God and man are united: yet each of these facts is intelligible. In the language of the civil law, husband and wife are one: and in the language of Christ, they are one flesh: and in the language of Paul, 'the head of the woman is the man: and the head of Christ is God.'

We do not speak without ideas when we say, the infinite uncreated nature, and a finite created nature, are united as one complex agent. They are 'one person' in a sense *akin* to the literal sense: *resembling* the literal sense.



They appear and speak and act, united as one. From the same mouth issue words, which suggest as concomitant, Divinity and Humanity. When God and Man conjoined, speaking through the same lips, uses the personal pronoun I: here is something analogous to a literal person. And this mode of speaking is common in the old testament and the new. Judges ii. 1—‘And an ANGEL of the LORD came up from Gilgal to Bochim, and said: I made you go up out of Egypt, and brought you into this land which I swore unto your fathers. And I said, Ye shall make no league with the inhabitants: ye shall break down their altars. Why have ye not obeyed my voice?’

Who is the speaker using the personal pronoun ‘I?’ ‘AN ANGEL.’ The pre-existent soul of Christ. ‘My name is in him,’ said Jehovah. God, and the ‘Angel of his presence,’ speak as one literal person speaks, saying, ‘I made you go up out of Egypt.’

So of the pronoun He. ‘And *Jehovah*, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple; even the *Messenger* of the covenant whom ye delight in: behold, HE shall come.’ —Mal. iii. 1.

The co-operation of ‘Jehovah’ and ‘the Messenger’ is such that they appear to us to act as one. ‘The Father worketh and I work:’ yet the effect produced is one. Jehovah is Judge. The Man is Judge: for every eye shall see him as Judge. This does not mislead us. For we understand that ‘God will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained.’ Who will raise the dead? God will. ‘I, said the man Jesus, will raise him up at the last day.’ We are not misled. ‘He that raised up the Lord Jesus, will raise up us also by Jesus.’—II. Cor. iv. 14. The Archangel\* co-existing and

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\* The bible knows no Archangel but the created man Jesus.

co-acting with God, having the trump of God, will proclaim with effect, Arise ye dead, and come to judgment. This sounds like 'God manifest in the flesh.'

Who was the speaker who in addressing the leper, said, 'I will; be thou clean?' Clearly the Man Jesus. Otherwise the hearers were deceived. And clearly the Father who dwelt in him, spake with him, and efficiently imparted the healing. God speaks through the mouth of the man: makes the man his organ of speech: and therefore calls the man his Logos Word.<sup>11</sup> In the same sense, God created all things. And the Logos created all things. 'God created all things by Jesus Christ.'—Eph. iii. 9. The Logos was the speaker who said, 'Let there be light.' 'Let us make man.' Yet he notifies us, 'The words that I speak, I speak not of myself. The Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works.'

He who is Man, is our Intercessor. Saints pray submissively for undeserved favors. And God is moved to acts of mercy. Our Intercessor says, 'I will that they be with me:' that the spirit be poured out at Jerusalem: that the dead be raised: that the world be burned. And when he speaks; Omnipotence effectuates. His will and the effect are as connected, as a literal person's will and the actions of his limbs.

Pure Divinity is not changed into Man. Man is not changed into Divinity. The Man Jesus is 'the image of the invisible God:' speaks forth his wisdom, his will, his excellent greatness: is 'with God:' is 'in him, and he in him.' They will, and speak, and act together. *There is a declared union; and an apparent union. And this we call a personal union; because, speaking and acting in unison, they bear a striking analogy to one literal acting person.* This is what I mean. And if this be understood: and it

still be objected that this is not well expressed by the words 'personal union,' and 'one person:' I agree at once to surrender the words. I only say that if I use them, I am responsible for an explanation of my meaning.

The bible every where presents the Son as revealing the Father. The reader to whom the bible is familiar, no sooner thinks of the man Jesus; than God presents himself to view. Their union is the most perfect revealed to us; and is made the pattern of that union among saints; and between saints and God; in which they will be blessed forever. 'That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me; and I in thee.'

Two distinct natures: ('thou in me and I in thee:') are concomitant in their being; and concurrent in action. We see them so inseparably, that we worship them together. Each of them is in the bible called God; although the one is infinite, the other finite. The one is Jehovah on the throne: the other the Lamb that was slain. Heaven's hosts praise and bless them together: their supreme love and worship extending to Supreme Divinity.

Derivative characters when ascribed to Supreme Divinity, degrade Divinity. All men, and angels, and heaven's hosts are under him, below him, beneath him, subject to him, dependent on him. He who but wills to rise to his exalted station, presently finds himself borne down by a hand which nothing can withstand. Yet so is his will, that one in our own nature is received into union with this peerless superior: and has authority and rule and judgment and qualifications committed to him: such as can symbolize with nothing else. For 'to which of the angels said he at any time, Thou art my Son? Sit on my right hand?' Of whom else has he said, 'Worship him all ye Gods?' 'To him every knee shall bow?' And, 'He shall



stand and rule in the strength of Jehovah, in the majesty of the name of Jehovah his God?' And who of creatures besides, could say, 'All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth?' Yet were all these things said of him that 'died, and rose, and revived.'

The two natures presenting themselves to our view in conjunction; we view them as one complex object, having the characters and titles of Divinity: and also inferior characters and titles; such as Son begotten, child born, messenger, man, anointed, priest, prophet, king on my right hand, and Logos the word of God. Not one of these last are titles of pure divinity. Even Son, and Logos Word are not. I mean when Logos is used for a perceiving agent.

This being understood, we can clear our theological path from much mystery and confusion. We can account for and in part reconcile the seemingly inconsistent expressions of Philo and other ancient Jews; and of the primitive christians before the trinity of equal persons was invented. And what is better, we can understand the bible.

Is not this complex being (God-Man) a proper subject to receive either the divine or inferior ascriptions given to Christ in the bible? He was the 'Jehovah whom ye seek, even the Messenger of the covenant whom ye delight in.' —Mal. iii. 1. He was the 'Jehovah who led Israel through the red sea in the pillar of a cloud and fire,' and the 'Christ whom they tempted in the wilderness:' the 'child born, and the everlasting Father:' the 'God that fed me all my life long, and the angel that redeemed me from all evil.' Not one of these is literal individuality. Nor are husband and wife literally one. God and Man united are not literally one person: but figuratively one: one in a sense resembling a literal person.

This explains Gen. xxxii. and Hosea xii. 'Jacob was left alone : and there wrestled a man with him until the breaking of the day. And Jacob called the place Peniel (face or vision of God.) For I have seen God face to face.' This shows that Christ's pre-existent soul assumed, for the occasion, a human body : as he often did from the beginning. Hosea calls this Man an Angel or Messenger. 'Jacob took his brother by the heel in the womb, and had power with God : yea, he had power with the Angel and prevailed : he wept and made supplication unto him : he found him in Bethel, and there he spake with us ; even the Lord God of hosts : Jehovah is his memorial.'

Here is the Man ; who is Angel or Sent : who ascends to heaven, and descends : the visible and tangible actor : the Logos or speaker. But with him and in him is 'the Lord God of hosts.' They are discovered conjointly. Literally they were two, God and Man. Analogically they were one.

But if any one will say that in these passages, 'Man' and 'Angel' and 'Lord God of hosts,' are all Divinity ; being two or three of the persons in the blessed trinity dealing with Jacob : and having said this, flee from the reproofs of conscience to the word 'Mystery : ' what can we do ? He may say that mind is mud ; and that this is a Mystery. Revelation is degraded to trifling riddles ; and language loses its relation to ideas.

Mr. Baxter says, 'Some of the writers of the primitive ages seem to think there were two natures in Christ before his incarnation : the first divine ; the second, a super-angelic created nature, first born of creatures, ministering to God.' This first born of creatures was the soul of Christ in 'the glory which he had with the Father before the world was.' He walked in Eden and conversed with

Adam : sat with Abraham under an oak : ' talked with Moses mouth to mouth : ' walked unhurt with Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego in the burning fiery furnace. And even Nebuchadnezzar was moved to say, ' We cast three men bound into the midst of the fire. And, lo, I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire : and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God.'—Dan. iii. Who can doubt but the three saints perceived God in and with their Deliverer with whom they walked. They were cast into the furnace because they said, ' Be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not worship thy Gods.' And ' our God will deliver us out of thy hand, O king.'

After the resurrection of Jesus, he said to unbelieving Thomas, ' Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands : and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side. And Thomas answered and said, My Lord and my God.'—John xx.

Thomas did not believe that the ' hands' and the ' side,' with the impress of the nails and spear, were the invisible God : nor that the arisen body was a part of the Godhead : nor that the soul now returned from hades and re-united with the body, was God Supreme.

But Thomas unexpectedly found his late Master triumphant from the hands of men ; from the cross, the nails, and the spear ; triumphant over death and the grave. The conviction was irresistible that the man Jesus bore a relation to God the Father more surprising than the disciple had before imagined. He may have been impressed with the same conviction of his union with Divinity, which Moses and the elders had, when seeing him on the mount, ' they saw the God of Israel : ' which the three Jews had, when they walked with him in the flames of the furnace : which John had, when he saw him on Patmos : and which



all men will have, when he shall come in the glory of his Father, with his holy angels, to judge the world.

If the address of Thomas, 'My Lord, and my God,' was made both to the sufferer now triumphant and to the Divinity whom he perceived to dwell in him : then his faith was such as Jesus enjoined on Philip : and such as the scriptures, now complete, teach all christians to imitate. He addressed God and Man in one view ; one analogical (not literal) person. In the correct and intelligible language of the learned Professor, he 'saw the attributes of human nature in such intimate conjunction with those of the divine, that he could not separate the agents.' He therefore addressed them as 'one person ; i. e. one agent.'

What connection the man Jesus had with a second person in the Godhead, the bible saith not. They who would ascertain, must consult the creeds of men.

'In the avowed declarations of the Athanasian trinitarians, Christ (the second person) derived his existence and Godhead, his power and glory, from the Father. Now derivation diminishes the lustre of the Divinity of Christ.'

'The human nature of Christ, in my explanation, is also gloriously exalted above the idea of a human soul which began its existence when Jesus was born of Mary. The human soul of Christ is a sublime spirit ; superior to angels. He was the first born of creatures : possessed of such capacious powers as, by virtue of the indwelling Godhead, might be employed in the wondrous transactions of creation and providence. To what a superior height this doctrine advances the whole person of Christ, as God and Man ! Nor let those who love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity, be afraid to hear of his various glories.'—Watts, p. 328.

Before his crucifixion, he said to his divine Father, 'Thou has given him (the Son) power over all flesh.'—John, xvii. 2. After his resurrection, he said, 'All power is given unto me in heaven and earth.' In swaying this power, the Man is the visible Actor. We, however, instantly recognise the indwelling God. The perfect image presents to the mind the divine Original. Hence Christ says, 'He that hath seen me, hath seen the Father.' So when Moses and the seventy elders saw him on the mount, it is said, 'They saw the God of Israel. And there was under his feet a paved work of a sapphire stone. And upon the nobles of Israel he laid not his hand. Also they saw God; and did eat and drink.'—Exod. xxiv.

Jacob wrestled with the 'man;' 'the angel:' and it is said, 'He saw God face to face.'

Isaiah saw the LORD sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up.—Isa. vi. John however says that Isaiah saw the Christ who wrought so many miracles in Judea.

Stephen saw the glory, i. e. the effulgence in which the Man is shrouded: and God who is 'with him' and 'in him.'

They all saw God, as John saw him on Patmos.—Rev. 1. He saw the Man in his ancient 'form of God.' He saw him 'clothed with a garment down to the foot; and girt about the paps with a golden girdle. His head and his hairs were white like wool: and his eyes as a flame of fire: and his feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace. And his voice was as the sound of many waters. And he had in his right hand seven stars. And out of his mouth went a sharp two edged sword. And his countenance was as the sun when he shineth in his strength.' Awfully splendid! John says, 'When I saw him, I fell at his feet as dead.' Still he saw the Man. For, 'He laid

his right hand upon me, saying, Fear not: I am he that liveth, and was DEAD: and behold, I am alive forevermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and death.'

With GOD he is worshipped by 'ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands.'—Rev. v. 'Every knee shall bow, and every tongue confess that he is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.'—Phil. ii. 11. All redounds to the glory of God. Divinity is the ultimate object of all: the only ground of all.

If these views are thought too highly to exalt the created Man Christ Jesus; even the Son who 'was wounded for our transgressions:' and who 'was dead:' if it be thought that, since the sufferer, was worshipped, there must have been a higher sufferer than the Man: let him who thinks so, furnish a substitute. In vain will a supposed uncreated Son in the essence of God, united to the Man Jesus, be substituted. That supposed Son and Second Person, is not that Sufferer 'by whose stripes we are healed.' That was not 'the Son who learned obedience by the things which he suffered.' Nor did that infinite Son humble himself to the death of the cross. Nor did his Father exalt him from such abasement. Nor was he 'the Lamb that was slain.' Nor do we owe him any thanks or doxology for any suffering on our account. Trinitarians shift their position; step backward and forward, rather than admit that their second person suffered.

When the trinitarian has told us what duty we owe to that infinite Son who is immutably blessed: (of him, the bible says nothing:) and also what duty we owe to other two infinite and blessed persons: (of them the bible says nothing:) let him then point out, and from the scriptures too, what thanks or worship we owe to the Son of man who was the suffering victim whom God so 'highly exalt-



ed.' And if what he offers, better accords with the first command in the decalogue ; and also with the numerous passages in which his exaltation to God's throne and worship is set forth : we will thankfully accept such substitute. It equally concerns the trinitarian and the unitarian fairly to meet this subject. Yet it is by trinitarians, so far as I am informed, ' rendered obscure ; and not only obscure, but unintelligible ; and not only unintelligible ; but utterly lost in the strangeness of the phraseology.' We are confidently asked, ' What creature would dare associate himself with God in such an act of authority ? and thus presume to ascend the throne of his Maker ?'—Dwight. So he is reduced from the rank in which John saw him, when he ' fell at his feet as dead : ' and heard the doxologies, which principalities ascribe to him, associated with the Father on the throne. Till better informed, I must continue to say, ' Blessing and honor and glory be unto him that sitteth on the throne ; and unto the Lamb that was slain.'

## [I.]

Paul said, ' Though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you, let him be accursed.'—Gal. i. 9. Paul knew it was impossible an angel from heaven should do this. And with this impossible supposition, he well illustrated the necessity of adhering to the gospel as delivered by Christ ; regardless of the creeds and traditions of men.

Of the Father the first person in the trinity ; I ask the honest trinitarian, *Is he a person of infinite natural and moral perfections ?* Without guile, he says, Yes.

Of the Eternal Son, the second person ; *Is he a person of infinite perfections ?* Yes.

Of the Holy Ghost, the third person ; *Is he a person of infinite perfections?* Yes. The three sacred persons are equal in power and glorious perfections.

If the third of these persons were subtracted from the sacred three ; *would all the Godhead remain in the two first?* That, says he, is impossible.

Agreed. We only propound an impossible supposition. In mathematical science, the whole is greater than a part. We do not believe the bible and Euclid disagree. Turtulian against Praxeas maintained, 'The Father is the whole substance ; and the Son a *portion* of the whole.'

The bible teaches the Divinity of Christ in a three fold higher sense, than those who only extract the second person from three persons ; and contemplate this second person as united to the Humanity.

To avoid this conclusion, it is said, The Son is equal to himself and the Father both. And adding the other person, The Son is equal to the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost ; equal to the whole Godhead ; and so he is absolutely Jehovah. Hence says the trinitarian, I believe in the Divinity of Christ in as unqualified a manner as you do.

Be it even so. We are then inclined to think the whole arrangement into persons, loses its importance. 'If the existence and attributes which constitute one person, be not increased by the addition of two other persons ; the two additional persons must be nihilities.'

Professor Stewart apologizes for the language which seems so sorrowfully misleading. 'We profess to use the word *person* merely from the poverty of language : to designate a real distinction in the Godhead : not independent, conscious beings, possessing separate and *equal essences and perfections* ; not *equal*, but *numerically the same*. Is there any more difficulty here, than when you say, God

is angry with the wicked every day ? You say, this is intended to describe *that* in the mind of the Deity, or in his actions, which corresponds in some respect to anger in men. We speak of person in the Godhead to express that which in some respect corresponds to persons as applied to men ; i. e. some distinction. Why should we be obliged so often to explain ourselves on this point ?—p. 34 and 20.

On which we remark :

1. ‘ The poverty of language ’ is far less than the poverty of *ideas* to be expressed. If the bible has given us *clear ideas* of persons, or distinctions in God ; it has probably furnished appropriate words in which we can express *the ideas*. If the sacred writers have *expressed the ideas* with much circumlocution ; yet actually *expressed* them ; so as to have *conveyed the ideas* to our minds ; it is incredible that we have yet in our improved language, no words accurately expressive of the *ideas*.

If it be really revealed that there are persons, or philosophical distinctions in God ; and that their number is three ; and neither more nor less than three : and that we have no means of knowing what they are : useless as this unintelligible information would seem to my reason ; I still would bow submissive. After all, we have on this subject an inundation of words ; but an absolute barrenness of ideas.

2. ‘ We profess to use the word person to designate .....not conscious beings, possessing *equal essences and perfections*.’ The Professor in this extract rejects persons of *equal perfections*. He departs from the professions made in probably every orthodox church in the land. He therefore shuns one of their grand absurdities. They profess to believe in three persons possessing *equal perfections* : not ‘ *equal essences and perfections* ; ’ but three persons with ‘ *equal perfections* ’ in *one essence*. When they say, ‘ Three



persons equal in power and glory ;' they mean equal in the *perfection* of power, and in all other divine *perfections*. When they shall adopt the language of the Professor, they will *not* ' be obliged so often to explain themselves on this point.'

3. ' Is there any more difficulty here, than when you say, ' God is angry with the wicked every day,' &c. ?

If the two cases are parallel ; we shall soon be able to clear away both absurdity and mystery. For we can intelligibly show what that is in the mind of God, and in his acts, which is called anger. And we can, with clear ideas, point out those ' respects in which it corresponds with anger in men.' We can understandingly describe the justice of God ; or his universal benevolence, operating against the selfish who oppose the general good. And we can point to the judgments with which he daily smites the earth. As injured men who are angry ; resist, and inflict evils on their assailants.

Now if we can understand what theologians mean by three persons, or distinctions in God ; and if we can point out wherein they correspond with persons among men : we shall be in the region of *ideas*. And this ' will tend to the quieting of disputes.' Let him who feels able to furnish *the ideas*, make the attempt. The problem of three equal persons in one essence is unknown to the bible. And it has hitherto been without solution : because void of meaning. If we have nothing to express, the fault is not in our language. If we have meaning, we can express it.

## [K.]

In reviewing 'the scholastic scheme invented by subtle schoolmen, derived down to us from the popish church ;' and considering that 'it was never *designed* to convey a clear conception to the minds of christians :' we are naturally asked, *Why it was made ?*

We answer by asking the parallel questions. *Why do popish priests show some of the blood of Christ in a phial ? or, pieces of the wood of the cross ? or, relics of saints with their miraculous qualities ? Why were ancient magic, and witchcraft, and evoking spirits from the earth, and exorcisms ? Why did the Ephesian priests tell the people that the image which they had fabricated, 'fell down from Jupiter ?'* These are mysteries only while we forget that ignorance is credulous ; and that men are selfish. Knowledge has been with the few : and the more so, the further we go back into antiquity. And knowledge, without holiness, or rectitude, is crafty.

Men are fond of the marvellous. Nonentities assume consequence, by pretences of occult powers. They acquire a local habitation, and a name. Magical words and gesticulations ; the wand of the necromancer ; pomp, and mystical rites ; are means by which the few have ruled the many ; and rendered themselves sacred in the eyes of their retainers. A priesthood which is selfish, with an improved address, easily governs the minds of the uninformed : easily confines them within its own sect and interest : and easily imparts to them a due abhorrence of those without their enclosure. The certain advantages are reverence, power, immunities, revenues. 'Verily they have their reward.'

But *why*, we may be asked, *should any of the mystical corruptions of antiquity continue their sway into our improved times ?*

We answer. Just as the ancient dynasties of kings, claiming under divine right and immemorial prescription. Just as negro slavery continues in families professing godliness.

*And what is the remedy ?*

Not force : but the press : civilization : study of the bible : the broad light of general knowledge diffusing itself among the lower classes : and not one, nor all of these, unless the blessing and the spirit of God be poured upon us abundantly through Jesus Christ. The signs of the times inspire us with hope that 'the night is far spent ; the day at hand.' Another half century may loosen the yet remaining fetters, forged in dark ages for human minds. Free enquiry ; review of the past ; relief from human impositions and mysteries : looking to the future with its improvements already advancing : clear ideas of subjects within the reach of our understanding : the spirit of piety and of God : these combined are gradually evolving truths and blessings for the coming generations. Ministers of rectitude, disinterested and heaven born, are co-workers with God in unfolding those truths ; and widely spreading those blessings.

We are pressed for money with which to evangelize all the world. As to appropriate means, we should think Apostolical ministers are the real desideratum. When *God's converts* shall be the 'great company that shall publish the word ;' 'many will run to and fro ; and knowledge,' not mysteries, 'shall be increased.' Such ministers will move with zeal in the sphere of peaceful, unarmed, un-earthly influence : presenting the truths and precepts of the inspired word : the spirit of Christ beaming forth in their lives, as in the primitive times. To such, bread will not be wanting.



[L.]

‘ I could heartily wish that the word person had never come into the symbols (creeds) of the churches : because it has been the occasion of so much unnecessary dispute and difficulty.’—Stewart, p. 34.

‘ You may perhaps find fault with us, that we speak of *three persons* in the Godhead, where there is but one nature ; and of *one person* in Christ where there are two natures. I admit that it is an apparent inconsistency in the use of language : and cannot but wish it had not originally been adopted.’

‘ The present generation of trinitarians do not feel responsible for the introduction of such technical terms, in senses so diverse from the common ideas attached to them. For my own part, I have no attachment to them. I think them injudiciously chosen ; and heartily wish they were by general consent exploded. They serve principally to keep up the form of *words*, without definite *ideas*.’—p. 55.

This is the language of a man who has his own scheme of trinity : who adopts the protestant maxim that ‘ The bible is the only rule of faith and practice :’ and who by his honesty, talents, and learning, is at the head of his profession.

Admitting, as the Professor does, that ‘ three persons in the Godhead, where there is but one nature, is an apparent inconsistency in the use of language :’ that ‘ such technical terms are injudiciously chosen :’ that ‘ they serve principally to keep up a form of words, without distinct ideas :’ and that he ‘ wishes they were by general consent **EXPLODED** :’ I ask, What should hinder the clergy, by general consent, from **EXPLODING** them ? They cannot much longer hinder the people from exploding them. An

enlightened people will sweep them away with the detected delusions, and rejected follies of other times.

When thirty five years ago, I was called to organize a church in Cazenovia, and I became its pastor; I was aware of the solid reasons for exploding such deluding language. And in the Confession of Faith which I prepared, and which that church adopted; no such language was used. During my ministry there, that church did not distribute the Godhead into persons. So long, that church was like the primitive apostolical churches, individual, independent, and congregational.

It was then known that with the orthodox article in our creed; such a man as Watts could not honestly join our church: nor we receive him. Because of his superior light and grace; he must stand at a distance from us: and for the same reason, we must reject him. I then supposed, and still suppose, that with 'three equal persons' in our creed; we must, if the twelve apostles had asked admission, have rejected them. For they could not assent to words, which, literally understood, contained tritheism. And if we had set up the common pretense that we did not mean literal persons; they could not, with their honesty, bow assent; till we informed them *what we did mean*. And this would have been quite impossible. We could never have satisfied them that literal and figurative persons 'jumbled together,' were 'equal in power and glory.'

In the impossible case supposed; how could Professor Stewart have helped us out of our difficulty? He must have told the apostles, as he has honestly told us: 'My mind is absolutely unable to elicit any distinct *ideas* from any of the definitions of person in the Godhead which I have ever examined.'—p. 38. No honest minister on earth could have furnished any aid. An honest minister

would by no means tell the apostles, that it was a very venerable mystery; and that it went very well over the heads of the people. Nor could a minister of the most finished guile, have furnished any aid. For the honest apostles would not have allowed him to talk them out of their senses; nor to have smothered up the subject in mystery. I therefore ‘exploded’ such language.

Ministers speaking in the name of God one thing, and meaning another; speaking of three persons, and not meaning persons: ‘dissemble.’ They are like those dissemblers whom Paul ‘withstood to the face:’ because ‘they walked not uprightly, according to the truth of the gospel.’—Gal. ii.

[M.]

‘There is One God: and One Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus.’—I. Tim. ii. 5.

If ‘there is One God’ only; then there are not three. If there is ‘One Mediator’ only; and that ‘One’ is ‘the Man Christ Jesus:’ then, besides that ‘Man,’ there is not another. Yet I apprehend, it is the opinion of the orthodox, that the Mediator is the Second Person in God ‘in a diminished condition;’ rather than the ‘Man Christ Jesus.’ Is this a less remove from the *text*, than the opinion of the catholics that their saints are mediators? and that the blessed virgin above them all, is Mediatrix? To her they offer prayers: and are said to believe that she, in her rights as Mother, commands her Almighty Son to hear us.

Indeed the Blessed Virgin has been called ‘the Complement of the trinity:’ as if the Godhead was not fully rounded out by three persons without her. These corruptions of christianity have great antiquity. The Collyridians in the fourth century, taught that the Virgin Mother



was a Goddess, and worshipped her as such; offering her a sort of twisted cake. The notion of her Divinity, it is said, was entertained by some of the council of Nice.—Vid. Sale's Koran.

Hear an inspired apostle. 'It is not possible that the blood of bulls and goats should take away sins. Wherefore when he cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldst not: but a *body* hast thou prepared me [fitted me, in the margin.] In burnt offerings for sin thou hast had no pleasure. Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me) to do thy will, O God.'

'Above, when he said, Sacrifice and burnt offerings thou wouldst not (which are offered by the law;) then said I, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God: he taketh away the first' (burnt offerings) 'that he may establish the second' (God's will that the pre-existent soul of Christ should come and take the body which God had fitted for it.) 'By which will we are sanctified, through the offering of the *body* of Jesus Christ once for all.' And every priest offereth often times the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins: but this MAN after he had offered one sacrifice for sins, forever sat down on the right hand of God: from thenceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool.'—Heb. x. 5, and on.

This passage does not look much like the catholic priest, in the sacrifice of the mass; offering the body and blood, the soul and Divinity of Christ, for the living and the dead: nor much like his protestant imitator; who supposes that the Divinity of Christ begotten in the virgin, in a 'diminished condition expired on the cross.' Yet here is the apostle's account of the atonement. Here is the pre-existent soul of the Mediator, and the body prepared for him.

Here 'this Man offered one sacrifice for sins.' Here is the 'One Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus.' He is neither first, second, nor third person in an obscure mystery. He is 'the Son of man who shall come in the glory of his Father ; and reward every man according to his works.'

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The Humanity of Christ is also ' the image of the invisible God.'—Col. i. 15.\*

There is something in man that inclines him to reverence the Image of the being whom he worships. Images graven with hands, withdraw the attention from God Supreme. They are forbid. God himself has presented us with 'an express Image' of himself. In this Image, his perfections gleam with brilliance. This living image is made the medium of our worship. ' By him we have access unto the Father.'—Eph. ii. 18. ' Give thanks to God even the Father by him.'—Col. iii. 17.

Is this 'Image' the second person in God? Impossible. For then the Image is necessarily invisible; non-appearing; inconceivable; no exhibiter of the original; no image; certainly no '*express image*.'

Is the Essence of Christ's Divinity the Image of the Father's Essence? Impossible. For then there are two Essences as well as two Persons in God Supreme.

Is God as Son an Image of God as Father? Impossible. Sonship is so far from being Image of Paternity, that it is correlative: stands in the opposite relation. Moreover if God the Son equal to the Father, walked about in Judea, and said, 'Of myself I can do nothing:' he practiced a

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\* See Stewart's opinion, already quoted on p. 100.

weakness, and an apparent want of truth, illy calculated to reflect the glories of 'the invisible God.'

Since therefore Christ's Divinity is neither the Image of the Father's essence, nor of his paternity: the words 'Image,' 'dear Son,' and 'express Image,' intend his Humanity. His created nature is 'the Image of the invisible God.' For,

1. His soul is a creature having the nearest likeness to the Creator in intellectual powers: nearer than the soul of the first 'Adam which was the Son of God:' nearer than angels who are 'Sons of God.'

2. He often assumed a visible form in the early ages: and appeared and acted in a visible glory: God speaking and acting in him.

3. In the fullness of time he took upon him 'the body prepared for him:' and tabernacled among us, as one whom 'we have seen with our eyes:' and 'in whom dwelt all the fullness of the Godhead bodily.'

Finally, every word and act of his life was expressive of the disinterested kindness of the invisible God.

Paul, in calling 'his dear Son the express image of his person' (person in the singular number,) sufficiently shows that Paul was unaware of there being three persons in 'the invisible God.' Otherwise he would have called him 'the express image of his persons.' For if there are three; he was in the same sense 'the express image' of each of them. Paul believed in the unity of 'person,' as well as in the unity of 'God.' He had read of 'the Holy One' in the scriptures. The Sacred Three in christian theology, are 'new:' 'came up,' ages after Paul's death.



[N.]

Christians love, and trust, and worship Jesus Christ. This implies that we love, and trust, and worship God the Father united with the Man, the Mediator, the Son, who 'died and arose and revived : ' both in one view. For if we dismiss from our thoughts the Man ('him whom thou hast sent ;') and in our worship address ourselves to pure Divinity only ; we do not love and trust and worship Jesus Christ. No man calls pure Divinity, irrespective of the Man who was crucified, by the name Jesus Christ. The Humanity as distinguished from the Divinity, is often called Jesus Christ in scripture : the Divinity as distinct from the Man, never.

Lose sight of the Man. Love, and trust, and worship the invisible God merely. This is deism ; or the worship of pure Deity only. This may be the worship of sinless beings on worlds where we and our redemption are yet unknown.

Lose sight of the Man. Love, and trust, and worship Divinity only ; and this Divinity, Three equal Persons. This is Paganism. This cannot be the worship of sinless beings on any world.

Neither this Deism, nor this Paganism, will answer for us : or render us, bible christians. We have sinned. And it is too late for us to think of escaping condemnation by any righteousness we now have, or ever shall have. 'The gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.' —Rom. vi.

The Gospel of Grace, addressed to us, is plain. 'Be it known unto you all, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, even by him doth this man stand here before you whole. Neither is there salvation in any other. For

there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.'—Acts, iv.

The Grace of God which bringeth salvation to the lost, appears to us then only, when we 'believe in him that was to come ;' and who has come from heaven to earth ; and whom God has raised from the dead.

In the very faith by which we are justified, there is involved a concession on our part, that we deserve damnation. We sue for pardon. We then admit our guilt. Faith is pleasedness with the Mediator who justifies all that his Father has done ; and condemns us. God in his good pleasure has prescribed this condition of forgiveness to those who are justly heirs of wrath. Those wedded to their sins, and enemies to God, cannot be pleased. Those whom regenerating grace has changed, are pleased with the 'one Mediator the Man Christ Jesus.' 'Sanctified by God the Father,' they believe God. And believing him, they believe his testimony. They therefore believe that Jesus is the Son of God. And 'whosoever believeth that Jesus is The Christ, is born of God.' They 'confess that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh ;' even him 'in whom dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily.' Aside from this, we sinners have no hope.

Divinity shines forth in all his works. But to us sinners, mercy and salvation from the Divinity shine forth only in and through the Lamb that was slain : the Man whom he has exalted to his throne : and to whom he has committed the mediatorial government, and the final judgment.\* Divinity and Humanity, in one view, is the object of the love, and trust, and worship of regenerated sinners. If not ; let him who is *able*, detect and point out the error. To him, I will be a thankful debtor. He who is able to do this, will not be likely to fancy himself an holy Inquisitor. Those

who intrench themselves in the 'Unknown Darkness,' may '*Cry havoc, and let slip the dogs of war.*'

[O.]

'I certainly do not feel myself bound to vindicate any of the definitions of *person*, or *distinction* in the Godhead, which I have ever seen : because I do not adopt them. I do not, and cannot understand them. And to a definition I cannot assent, still less *defend* it ; until I do understand what it signifies. I have no hesitation in saying, that my mind is absolutely unable to elicit any distinct and certain *ideas*, from any of the definitions of *person* in the Godhead, which I have ever examined.'—Stewart, p. 38:

Such, too, is my experience. Searching through a formidable array of words ; all ideas evaporate in an uncollectable inane. And why ? Plainly because the writers and speakers have no *ideas* to express ; and therefore can express none.

And shall it still be said, The doctrine of three persons in God, is as intelligible as the infinity or eternity of God ? An honest man cannot say this. I know what I mean when I say, God is infinite and eternal. Whether my definition of eternity be affirmative or negative, I can express my meaning. I therefore have a meaning. I go out and ask questions on the subject among illiterate persons : and I know from their answers, that they understand me ; and I understand them. We have ideas, knowledge, understanding. 'And this serves much to the quieting of disputes.'—Locke.

In Geometry, it is said, that strait lines in the same plane, which being *infinitely extended* both ways, will never meet ; are parallel lines. The young Tyro in Geometry understands this. He is as fairly within the field of sci-



ence, when he reads of two lines *infinitely extended* ; as when he reads of two lines *extended three feet*. No quibbler can beat him out of it. A priest only, threatening him with damnation, and putting screws on his thumbs, can make him admit that this is as unintelligible as three co-equal persons in one essence.

[P.]

This ignorance will surprise us the less, when we remember that more than one hundred years later, ministers and kings and judges believed in the supernatural power of witches.

About one hundred and forty years ago, the Minister of Salem in Massachusetts supposed his two daughters were ‘under an evil hand :’ and he accused a young squaw who lived in the house as being the witch : and by harsh treatment compelled her to confess it. The mystery spread like wildfire. Three others were accused and hanged. Shortly after, ‘sixteen others ; together with a lawyer, because he would not plead against them ; and was supposed a partaker of the mysterious power. Torments were employed to extort confessions. If magistrates, tired of executions, refused to punish ; they were themselves accused. The ministers of religion raised false witnesses against them ; and made their lives the forfeit of their humanity.’

‘An old wrinkled woman, it was supposed, could metamorphose herself into a cat ; or pass through the key-hole of a door ; or transport herself on a broom-stick through the air. Such hallucinations of the human intellect still prevail : and are proof that we are, as yet, but just emerging from the gloom of intellectual darkness.’

[Dick’s ‘*Improvement of Society by the Diffusion of Knowledge.*’]

The popular writings of Dr. Dick will do much toward elevating the public mind. He too adopts the bible as his religious creed. 'The religion to whose characteristics I advert, says he, is not that form of christianity established in Italy, in Germany, in Russia, or in Great Britain : or which is professed by Episcopalians, Presbyterians, or any other sect : or which is expounded in the catechisms, confessions, or systems of divinity which have been published. In all these, its glory has been obscured, and its purity contaminated, by passing through the atmosphere of human folly and corruption. *It is to the christianity of the bible alone to which I refer.*'

The same author says, 'A sectarian spirit has infused jealousies ; fanned the flame of discord ; and has led men to violate humanity and natural justice. It has corrupted our prayers ; and infused into them human passions and party spirit : as if the Omnipotent were biased by the same prejudices as ours ; and dispensed his favors according to our contracted views.'

'Could we fly, swift as an angel, through the assemblies convened on the sabbath, where men are offering up their prayers ; what a repulsive scene would present itself ? We should hear the leaders of sects imploring special blessings on themselves as the chief favorites of heaven ; throwing out inuendoes against others ; taking credit to themselves as the chief depositories of the truth ; and thanking God for their superior purity.'

'In our present mode of propagating the gospel among the heathen, we are sowing the seeds of the dissensions which prevail among ourselves. And, therefore, till the religious denominations act in more harmonious union, we cannot expect an extensive propagation of christianity. While professors are fired with zeal about phrases, and

forms; and lest ordinances should be tainted with unwashed hands: we sometimes find them immersed in sensualities: and so fraudulent in business, that we feel less dependence on their promises, than on those of men who make no profession of religion.'

'And what are the remedies? In the first place we must discard the greater part of those human systems of divinity which have been substituted for The Oracles of God. We must revert to the Scriptures, as the sole standard. We must discard the refinements of the schools, and the technical terms of polemical theology.'

'It is remarkable, that the chief points about which christians are divided, are points on which the scriptures are SILENT.'

I hope the reader is apprised that 'the mystery of the trinity;' 'three equal persons in one essence;' 'The Supreme God being a Son and second Person, having a Father;' and 'The Holy Ghost a third Person, a 'percipient agent,' proceeding from the Father and the Son:' 'are points on which the word of God is SILENT.' Yes, profoundly SILENT.

[Q.—p. 152.]

'Purgatory has been a terrific screw in sacerdotal hands, to extract from trembling mortals, more money than, perhaps, all the African slave trade ever accumulated. The one dealt in human bones and sinews and blood: the other traded, as John saw in vision, in human souls. The lust of gold, is the object of both.'—Dr. Brownlee.

Hence, in a world so depraved; self-interest mingles its influence in the policy of all orders of men; and exerts its sophistry on their understandings. Individuals are honest. There is 'a narrow way with here and there a traveler.'



[Q.—p. 164.]

The orthodox usually say, 'The Son of God' is the second person in the trinity, and equal to the Father the first person, and to the Holy Ghost the third person. Thus in Luke, i. 35—'The Holy Ghost' (the third person) 'shall come upon thee. Therefore that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called The Son of God' (the second person.) The second person was begotten by the third person: and his Father was the first person. And the virgin was the Mother of the second person, the Eternal God. This is one of the phases which the mystery presents in creeds and sermons. The more intelligent, as soon as its deformities are disclosed, object: and then slide back into language that implies all this.

The catholics pray thus: 'O holy Mary! obtain for us by thy intercession, light to know the great benefit which Christ has bestowed on us.' 'O most pure Mother of God!'

'*What revolting blasphemy!*' says Dr. Brownlee. 'God's Mother! And her mother, St. Anna, the Grand Mother of God! The infinite invisible Being God, has no Mother. *What a brutish mind conceived this idea!* Christ our Mediator, as *Man*, had a Mother. As God, he had no Mother.'

Orthodox protestants may think Dr. Brownlee has gone rather too far in saying, 'God has no Mother.' I, however, go one step further. I maintain that 'The infinite invisible being God; has no Mother, nor Father, nor Wife, nor Brethren, nor Sisters. All these are ascribed by heathens to their Gods.'

Whoever will go this length with me, is just as heterodox as I am. And I am as orthodox as he can be in any honest sense. For he who says, God has no Father, denies that Jesus as *Son* having a Father, is any part or par-

cel of the Godhead. There can be nothing in pure Divinity, which has a Father ; if the whole Divinity has no Father nor Mother. To pray to the Father of God Supreme, is as brutish, as to pray to the Mother of God Supreme.

‘ Son of God,’ born of Mary, is the Humanity of Christ. So thought Drs. Watts, and Stewart, and Brownlee, and Adam Clarke, and hundreds of others, who have been zealous defenders of the doctrines of Grace. And the belief of this is the grand discriminating point between me and the orthodox. And I never expect to hear a man who believes with me on this point, say in his prayers: ‘ O most pure Mother of God :’ ‘ O Father of Jehovah the Son :’ ‘ O Trinity, three persons and one God :’ ‘ O God the Holy Ghost proceeding from the Father and the Son :’ ‘ O Triune God, three in one and one in three.’

The God of the bible is never spoken of, in the bible itself, under any one of these appellations. Nor does the bible contain an example of any prophet or apostle or saint or angel, addressing God in such language. And I apprehend that the man who ‘ trembles at God’s word,’ will prefer to address him by the names and titles by which he has been pleased to characterize himself, in his sacred word.

That person, who was David’s Son ; was David’s Lord. Was David’s Lord the second person in the trinity ? Then the second person in the trinity was David’s Son. David was Father to the Divinity. Dust and ashes, Father to God ! and Jesse, Grand Father to God Almighty ! This in the protestant church, is like Dr. Brownlee’s account of Mary ‘ the Mother of God : and Anna, Grand Mother to God Almighty,’ in the catholic church. If the Humanity was David’s Son ; the Humanity was David’s Adonai Lord. And consequently pre-existed.

Dr. Brownlee notices the popish catechism which declares ; ‘ To represent the persons of the trinity by certain forms, under which they deigned to appear, is not contrary to the law of God.’ He then observes : ‘ On the stained glass in Cathedrals, God the Father is figured out as an old venerable man. On his right hand stands Christ as a pretty young man. Above, is the Holy Ghost in the shape of a dove. Near by, stands The Mother of God !’

Now this triune imagery was transferred from the popish to the English protestant church. For as late as the time of Charles I. (anno 1632,) one of the windows of St. Edmond’s church in Salisbury, had a picture of the first person in the trinity, in the form of a little old man, in a blue and red coat ; with a pouch by his side ; having a pair of compasses, to signify his compassing the heavens and earth. Mr. Neal in his History of the Puritans, says, ‘ Many simple people, going in and out of church, did reverence to this window ; because, as they said, their God was there.’

‘ This gave such offence to Henry Sherfield, Esq. recorder of the city of Sarum, that he moved the vestry of the parish for leave to take it down, and set up white glass in its place. This was granted, six justices of the peace being present.’

‘ Some time after, Mr. Sherfield broke with his staff the picture of the first person in the trinity, in order to new glaze the window. For this, an information was exhibited against him in the Star-chamber. Archbishop Laud stood up, and spoke in excuse of the painter, saying, God the Father is called the Ancient of days. And he insisted that Mr. Sherfield had done this in contempt of the episcopal authority.’ [‘ Contempt of priestly authority :’ not contempt of God’s authority, is the heresy in all such cas-



es.] 'Mr. Sherfield was fined £500, and removed from his recordership, and committed close prisoner to the fleet till his fine was paid ; and then bound to his good behavior.'

This was two hundred years ago. About eight years after, the long parliament commenced the work of reforming the national religion : and the house of commons ordered that all images of the trinity and the virgin Mary should be abolished.

After all : figuring out three persons by this imagery, would have lost its chief impropriety ; had it not been an unhallowed misnomer : had they not impiously called the three persons or pictures, The Father, and The Son, and The Holy Ghost.

## POSTSCRIPT.

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WHILE this Work was in the press, an event transpired, which will be sufficiently understood, by the following Letter, to which it gave rise.

### TO THE CORTLAND PRESBYTERY.

CAZENOVIA, Feb. 14, 1834.

MR. MILLS called on me as your agent, on his return from Presbytery, the last evening; to notify me, in the first stage of your discipline, of your dissatisfaction with me in two respects:

1. As disbelieving the doctrine of the trinity as set forth in the presbyterian church.

2. As having said light things of the clergy, tending to bring them into contempt.

I was here, superintending the publication of a theological work, of which you probably had information from Messrs. BARROWS and MUNSON. When you shall have read that publication (if you shall condescend to read it,) you will be able to form a correct judgment of the whole subject of your complaint.

I infer from what Mr. Mills said, that you will probably make some decision before my work will be published. It is known to presbytery from declarations I made the last time I was with you, that I suppose no member can be called to account by the church, without the two first steps mentioned in Matt. xviii. 15, 16: commencing with an individual; and then, with one or two others whom he has selected. You having commenced as a presbytery, by two agents whom you have appointed; I judge you mean, to proceed by the Directory, rather than by Christ's Rule in Matt. xviii.

I do not feel competent to engage in any defence by the complex rules and ecclesiastical law of the presbyterian judicatories.

When, many years ago, I as agent of The Middle Association negotiated a connection with the synod of Albany and with the presbyterian church; I reserved to myself and every minister and church composing that Association, all our congregational rights and privileges, as we had been accustomed to them. And having witnessed, since that time, several trials in presbytery, by

other rules, with little satisfaction; I long ago resolved never to be harrassed with such a trial. Advanced in years as I now am, I am still less inclined to such a toil.

I therefore notify you that I now secede from your body: and no longer consider myself as a member. And I acknowledge no longer any responsibility to the Courts of the presbyterian church. I take my original stand as a congregational minister. I do this with the less regret, from not being able, as your own records testify, to engage in public speaking. And as this course is most in accordance with my own repose and duty; I hope you also will deem it peaceable and just toward yourselves.

Wishing you the guidance and blessing of our Lord Jesus Christ, I am

Your fellow-servant

JOSHUA LEONARD.



## LATER POSTSCRIPT.

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WHEN Morgan's book was in the press ; his brethren seized, and gagged, and drowned him. And to make their conduct seem excusable, they represented him as a vile person.

Ministers do not approve of this example. And I regret that it should be suggested to my mind, by their haste in issuing several of their bulls from the Vatican ; before I could present them with this volume.

A few individuals move all political and ecclesiastical bodies. Many acting together in an evil work, feel but little responsibility. They do things together, especially when moved by artful leaders ; which they would be ashamed to do alone. Charity says that many of Morgan's persecutors were amiable men, moved on by bad leaders. No individual among them, acting on his own impulse alone, would have gone further than to have gagged him. Nor do I believe there are many individuals in Cortland presbytery, who, acting on their own impulse, would so much as have attempted to gag me.

Acting as a presbytery, the foregoing Letter, instead of being received as 'peaceable and just ;' is made a new offence : and the Articles of complaint now assume this form,\* viz :

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\* In one of the communications contumaciously sent to me by presbytery since my secession.

‘ 1. Common Fame charges you with denying the doctrine of the Trinity as set forth in the standards of the presbyterian church in the United States : declaring, that the doctrine of the Trinity as held by our standards is nonsensical, without meaning, and unscriptural.’

‘ 2. Common Fame charges you with disrespectful and contemptuous treatment of your brethren in the ministry, by your manner of speaking respecting them.’

‘ 3. You are also charged with a public offence against your co-presbyters, and against this presbytery, in denying their ecclesiastical authority over you, by speaking against it, and by your written communication to this body, of Feb. 14, 1834.’

Having seceded from the Cortland presbytery ; and assumed my original stand as a congregational minister : I am no more responsible to that presbytery than to the Divan at Constantinople. And making my appeal to the public, I submit the following remarks on the above charges.

As to what I am charged with declaring in the First Article : I apprehend that I have, in this book, proved it to be true.

If the doctrine of three equal persons in the Godhead is not void of sense ; why did not my co-presbyters aid a brother laboring in vain to ascertain that sense ? Would this have been too charitable and condescending among brethren ? Or did they feel incompetent ? Should either of them, or their whole collective wisdom, now or hereafter, set forth that sense ; so that others can understand it : they will discover an ingenuity which will surpass the estimate in which I have been accustomed to hold their powers.

As to their Second Article : I choose to speak with more caution. For while I see the wickedness of others, I am also conscious of my own.

During a considerable part of my life, I have been in what I may call the cabinet of the clergy. I marvel the less that Christ should have said, 'Beware : 'beware of wolves in sheep's clothing.' And that Paul should have said, 'Many : 'many false prophets have gone out into the world.' And, 'If it were possible, they would deceive even the elect.'

The ministry with its honors and emoluments, attracts not only the renewed, the humble, and the disinterested ; but the selfish, the ambitious, and the unholy. It is to be feared, the majority of the order are of the latter class. Hence, as history shows them ; they have, through successive ages, combined their influence ; and trampled on the necks of those who have refused to reverence their dogmas and decrees.

I have often pitied hearers : sometimes, because I thought their ministers incapable of teaching : and sometimes, because, though they were capable, I have thought them 'such as serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly ; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple.'—Rom. xvi. 18. I have felt indignant, when I have seen the people duped : and have spoken perhaps too severely of those who were religious by trade. I have suggested, in this book, that laics will best judge of clerics, by reading history.

It was knowledge furnished by history which led the patriot John Jay, to introduce into the original Constitution of this State, the following enactments. 'Whereas we are required to guard against that spiritual oppression and intolerance, wherewith the bigotry and ambition of weak



and wicked priests and princes have scourged mankind : This convention doth ordain, That the free exercise and enjoyment of religious profession and worship, shall forever be allowed within this State to all mankind.' And, ' No minister of the gospel or priest of any denomination, shall, under any pretense, be capable of holding any civil or military office, within this State.'

He knew that it is no slander to say, that *in past times*, ministers and priests, as an order of men, have generally been intolerant, ambitious, and wicked : and that rational liberty would be endangered in future, unless their lofty aspirations were curbed by the constitution. This is no denial of the humility and disinterestedness of individuals.

If I have represented the living clergy as more depraved than those who have passed away ; I have injured them. The clergy who are now endeavoring to weaken me in the public confidence, because I explode the mystic three ; are mild in their measures ; compared with the ruling ecclesiastics who persecuted our puritan forefathers. Modern legislators have clipped their wings. And had they the power of the ancient ecclesiastics, I do not believe they would treat me worse than those ecclesiastics treated the puritan reformers.

As to the Third Charge : it is an offence against me ; against my undoubted rights ; and against all such churches and individuals in this section of our country, as have not voluntarily surrendered their congregational rights.

These charges against me, set up other standards than the bible, viz : ' the standards of the presbyterian church in the United States.' They do not allude to the bible at all : or contemplate proceeding with me by any standard which Christ our only Lawgiver has set up in his word. They accuse me of departing from standards which I ne-

ver recognized : and assume to try me by Rules purely human : against which I always protested.

In aid of the future historian : and in defence of those congregational churches, or congregational individuals who may be subjected to human 'standards' *against their will* : I add what I should otherwise deem too egotistical.

I was the first pastor who settled in this wide region of country. My church was a single, apostolical, congregational church. I was a single, independent, congregational minister. From Cazenovia to the Pacific ocean, there was not one congregational or presbyterian pastor : not one in this state to the north or south of me : not one to the east, nearer than Mr. Steele of Paris in Oneida county.

In a few years, there were congregational ministers enough on the Military Tract and its vicinities to constitute an Association. Another Association arose in the Genesee country. And there was one in Oneida county. Of the Middle Association I was a member.

In our Association, we conferred at times on the subject of a General Association ; similar to that in Connecticut from whence we came. The question at length arose whether we might not form a general and friendly connection with the Synod of Albany ; we still retaining our name, (Association,) our congregational principles, liberties, and customs.

Our churches and their Delegates in Association, were very jealous of this project, as tending to a concentration of all ecclesiastical authority in presbyteries, and higher ecclesiastical courts. The ministers were not without some apprehension as to the result.

At length, Deacon Levi Jerome who is still alive, and myself, were deputed to the Synod of Albany, to ascertain whether such a correspondence could be formed. In sun-

dry conversations with Deacon Jerome, I labored to persuade him that the presbyterians would be liberal ; and that our congregational rights would be undisturbed. He could not be persuaded that we the ministers had not, even then, some concealed policy : or, if not ; he feared that those who would follow us, would forget the assurances we were now making to the churches : and finally pursue measures which would subvert their congregational rights. Conscious of the rectitude of my own intentions ; and with very charitable apprehensions of what would be the result ; I thought the Deacon was mistaken. What has since transpired, has shown that he judged the most correctly.

The Deacon declining to act ; I went alone to the Synod at Cooperstown. I proposed to Synod to receive us into a general connection : that our Association should meet with their presbyteries in Synod : that we would act together in missionary and other general measures in which we thought alike : that we would retain our independent congregational character, and usages, and name : that we should have assurance that presbyterians (the stronger party) should bring us under no subjection to their standards of doctrine or government or discipline : and that we and the delegates of our congregational churches would meet with their ministers and ruling elders in the General Assembly.

This, it was supposed, would form a liberal and christian correspondence : furnishing all the advantages of a General Association. That the means were not adapted to the end in view, events have shown.

The Synod acceded to the terms proposed : on condition that the General Assembly of the presbyterian church would permit them to form such a connection : and delivered to me a Letter to my Association, recognizing, and



as I supposed, securing our rights as ministers, and churches, and individuals. At the next meeting of the General Assembly, the doings of the Synod of Albany were sanctioned. The Middle Association sanctioned what I had done. And we became connected, as I thought, with silken cords of love; and by united aims in converting and saving men. This was towards thirty years ago.

The future ecclesiastical historian will trace out these our early doings on this fairest portion of our country. And he will narrate that as the country rapidly increased in settlers and wealth; multitudes of ministers, presbyterian and congregational, settled among us: and that a clerical influence, ever active, speedily operated in drawing closer the bands which connected us with the presbyterian church: and that the congregational churches, they not knowing how, were progressively bound by ligaments of coarser texture than at first: and that presbyterian enactments, rather than the inspired book of God, were made their standards.

The right of delegates from congregational churches to seats in the General Assembly, has already been questioned. The churches are now enjoined to elect ruling elders. It is pretended that the churches will crumble to pieces; if held together only by christian affection; and governed by a few laws of Christ found in the bible: and that the higher judicatories of 'Our Church,' in their Legislative Authority, must supply the defect which Christ has left in his code.

This statement is made for the information of those churches and individuals in this part of the country, who find themselves, *they know not how*, under 'standards of the presbyterian church in the United States.' They ought to know that if they choose to be apostolic, independent,

congregational churches ; their right to be so, is perfect. If an invisible clerical influence has placed them under standards foreign to their wishes ; they may, of right, secede. And if right and truth and christian benevolence remain behind : those from whom they secede, will cheer them with their blessing and good wishes : and not threaten them with censures ; and tell them, If you go, we, like the church of Rome, will anathematize you.

Illustration. The church in Cazenovia has changed its Confession of Faith. They have recently yielded a part of their duty and all their authority to a bench of Ruling Elders and higher Judicatories. A part of the members, for reasons that seemed good to them, have left the church, and ‘ the standards of the presbyterian church in the United States : ’ and formed a new church under their ancient standard, the word of Christ. This they have done in hope of bringing to pass a purer order and better state of things : a more spiritual church ; and a more decidedly pious ministry.

The church from which they have seceded, follow them with no cheering expressions of good will ; but denounce them as covenant-breakers.

How are they covenant-breakers ? When they covenanted to walk with the original church, was this covenant unconditional ? Did they as individuals mean to promise ; and did the church mean they should promise, to remain with the church, however spiritually dead it might become ? however the church might refuse to move forward in reformation ? however it might move back toward Rome, with its forms and canons, its courts and legislative authorities ? Did they promise to remain with the church, however satisfied they as individuals might be that its ministry was graceless and inefficient ? When they join-

ed the church, it was in hope of enjoying means of spiritual improvement and consolation: not that they might be fastened to a lifeless body. They also then engaged to make the scriptures their standard of faith and rule of life. Nor did they as individuals constitute the church the interpreter of the scriptures. The catholic church does this. Every protestant member covenants to be guided by the bible: he himself, (not the church,) being his own judge of its meaning. If he judge that the state of the church is such, that the bible leads him to come out of it; he is bound by his covenant to come out. He is no covenant breaker. Otherwise; if he be papist, he must remain papist: if an episcopalian, he must remain episcopalian. He must adhere to the church in an absolute apostacy. Did our puritan forefathers so believe? By no means. If we abide by human standards, when we judge the word of God leads another way; we are unworthy sons of the puritans: and we are unworthy of the christian name.

I now ask whence Cortland Presbytery derived 'their ecclesiastical authority over me?' 'authority' to bow me under 'standards' purely human? I have acknowledged the binding force of no ecclesiastical laws but those of Christ our King. Whence have presbytery 'authority' to constitute 'Common Fame' a criminal Prosecutor in my case? 'Common Fame' is a notorious liar, whose authority I have not acknowledged.

Cortland Presbytery says, 'Common Fame charges you with denying the doctrine of the trinity as set forth in the standards of the presbyterian church in the United States.' And what then? I now deny, and always denied several other things set forth in those standards. I have uniformly acknowledged the word of God as the only 'standard' of faith, and practice, and discipline.



Just after our first connection with the presbyterian church, I was a Commissioner from the Middle Association to the General Assembly. An appeal from a sentence of deposition, pronounced in a presbytery against a minister in one of the middle States, was brought up to that Assembly. When the Moderator (Dr. Romeyne of N. Y.) put the question to the members of the Assembly, whether the sentence of their lower courts should be sustained : the question was directed to me, as to others. I rose in my place, and assured the Assembly that I could not act in the case as a Judge : because the accused had not been proceeded with by the rules Christ had laid down : and that I acknowledged no other authority. The Moderator with great politeness acquiesced in my decision against acting in the case. My rights, and the rights of the Association whose Commissioner I was, were then well known in the Assembly. For our connection, and the terms on which it was formed, were then of recent occurrence.

I was subsequently a member of the Synod of Albany. The question was discussed in Synod, *whether children are baptized, because they are born members of the church.* In the course of the discussion, a minister said ; ‘ I have perceived a degree of impropriety in this whole discussion ; the General Assembly having decided on the relation of children to the church.’ This saying was indeed remote from my mode of thinking. I declared that no decision of the Assembly was to hinder us from examining the bible on the subject : and that what we found Christ had decided, would bind us conclusively : whatever the Assembly might say to the contrary.

Just before I removed from Lincklaen, (three or four years ago,) I met with Cortland Presbytery in that place.

I was on a committee to examine the Records of the church at Smithfield. And I announced, in making our report, that the doings of that church, for the year past, were correct and in order according to the standards of the presbyterian church: and in one important case, directly against the bible. I found they had excommunicated a brother, without proceeding according to Matt. xviii. or any other rule laid down by Christ our Lawgiver. This led to a discussion; in which, my congregational sentiments and adherence to the bible, were asserted.

What 'authority' then has presbytery to demand of me to believe whatever is set forth in human standards? and to submit to their decisions made by rules of human legislation?

In the time of Charles I., or two hundred years ago; our forefathers had plentiful experience of 'ecclesiastical authority' swayed by the Star-chamber as a 'Judicatory of Chirst.' That 'Judicatory' compelled the civil Judges of the land to make their decisions as they prescribed. Archbishop Laud resolved to bring part of the business of Westminster-Hall into the ecclesiastical courts. Civilians and the Gentlemen of the bar were offended at his ambitious projects. And Clarendon the Historian, though the friend of Charles and of Laud, condemns this clerical usurpation. He says, 'I have never yet spoken with one clergyman who hath had experience of both litigations, that has not confessed, that he had rather, in respect to his trouble, charge, and satisfaction to his understanding, have three suits in Westminster-Hall, than one in any ecclesiastical court.'—Neal, vol. 1, p. 481.

The love of power in the human heart is indeed ineradicable. Cortland presbytery is very sensitive when its ecclesiastical authority over me, is questioned. They have

derived that authority from no conventional compact; from no covenant which I have ever made with them, or with others. 'Their ecclesiastical authority' to bind me under 'the standards,' and to try me by the rules which uninspired men have set forth; is an authority 'not from above.' It is an authority '*of false brethren unawares brought in, who came in privily to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage: to whom we give place by subjection, no, not for an hour.*'—Gal. ii. 4, 5. Such was the decision of inspired Paul,















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